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### Between personal experience and detached information

Harbers, Frank

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# **Between Personal Experience and Detached Information**

The development  
of reporting and  
the reportage in  
Great Britain, the  
Netherlands and  
France, 1880-2005

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**Paranympths**

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Voor mijn vader en mijn moeder

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# Between Personal Experience and Detached Information

The development of reporting and the reportage in  
Great Britain, the Netherlands and France, 1880-2005

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Even F. R. Mansbridge, Jr., 1:21.0, 22sec.	
HIGH JUMP—E. H. Pretty, 1; H. P. Bowler, Jr., 2	

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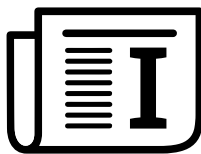
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## Introduction

Journalism is currently experiencing a far-reaching reconceptualization with regard to its function in society. Journalists and scholars alike are still convinced of journalism's value for democratic society in disseminating trustworthy information and keeping checks on the people and institutions in power. Yet, they also fear that contemporary journalism practice, in relation to the current institutional and commercial organization of the media landscape, may prevent its future viability in a digitized and networked society. For that reason, there is a lively debate that tries to tackle the question how professional journalism should perform and be organized in order to sustain its democratic role in Western societies. Especially newspaper journalism is having a hard time keeping afloat in times of dropping general readership, decreasing circulation, and declining advertisement revenues. As a result, the established professional norms, routines and textual forms revolving around objectivity are being questioned and discussed, and journalists and editors are looking for new ways to appeal to readers.<sup>1</sup>

However, the current debates have not resolved into anything like a clear consensus about how journalists can reconnect to their readership. The former editor-in-chief of the Dutch newspaper *NRC.Next* and founding father of the innovative crowd-funded and online-only journalistic platform *De Correspondent*, Rob Wijnberg, has renounced objectivity, inscribing himself into a tradition of scholarly critique that views objectivity as an influential illusion. According to Wijnberg, the efforts to maintain this illusion have contributed to the readership's disengagement with the world. Conversely, he makes a compelling argument for a return to the traditions of storytelling in journalism.

Objectifying news makes it much harder to feel engaged with what the news is about. Removing the narrator from the story, and thus the one that can establish engagement with the world, means creating a distance between the public and the world. That is exactly why *De Correspondent* says goodbye to the traditional objectivity ideal. Not only because objectivity is to a certain extent always feigned (that the subjective choices and considerations that precede every story remain implicit, doesn't mean they are not there), but first and foremost because *De Correspondent* wants to close that gap between public and world (and public and journalist). The moment you let go of the idea that you can show the world 'the way it is', the aim of journalism becomes entirely different, i.e. to show the world in a way 'that you start to care about it'.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, Wijnberg challenges the dominant professional framework revolving around objectivity and suggests it is losing its credibility and authority.

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- 1 Cf. James R. Compton (2010). "Newspapers, Labor and the Flux of Economic Uncertainty," in *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism*, ed. Stuart Allan, (Routledge: London/New York, 2010) 591-601; Huub Wijfjes, "Kranten voor de zondvloed? Het krantenlandschap in de Lage Landen anno 2010," *Ons Erfdeel*. 53, no.1 (2010): 46-55; Jack Fuller, *What is Happening to News. The Information Explosion and the Crisis in Journalism* (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 2010), 1-11.
  - 2 Rob Wijnberg, "Waarom een verhaal niet zonder verteller kan," *De Correspondent*, April 13, 2013 <http://blog.decorspondent.nl/post/47858813554/waarom-een-verhaal-niet-zonder-verteller-kan> (accessed last on June 14, 2013); All the originally Dutch and French quotes are translated into English. All the translations are mine.



Certainly, not all journalists and scholars agree with Wijnberg. Many perceive such new initiatives as threats to the foundations of journalism. In their defense of the professional framework that Wijnberg undermines, they emphasize its importance for journalism's role as the fourth estate of society. This role in society is in their opinion ingrained in and safeguarded by a journalism practice that acts - or at least strives to act - as a mirror of reality. From this perspective, objectively providing checks and balances on people in power, like politicians, diplomats and influential Chief Executive Officers, and notifying citizens accordingly, means that journalism facilitates peoples' ability to rationally inform themselves and base their thoughts, debates and decisions on trustworthy and unbiased information.<sup>3</sup> The almost inextricable connection between journalism's 'watchdog' role and this 'objectivity regime' has provided journalism with a powerful legitimizing narrative.<sup>4</sup> As scholars such as Ward and Schudson have argued, its cultural authority is rooted in the disconnection between the information and the subjective consciousness of the reporter, in the sense that an article is unaffected by a journalist's particular perspective and ideological preferences. Yet, the same scholars also point to the artificiality and untenability of this opposition, which lies at the core of much of the scholarly critique on objectivity of the past few decades.<sup>5</sup> It is exactly this issue that journalists like Wijnberg have picked up on and which they connect to the rise and importance of storytelling.

Of course Wijnberg's 'mission statement', which caused much debate in the Dutch context, is not the first time the subjectivity of journalists in relation to the use of storytelling techniques has been debated. The question of how reality can be captured best is an important issue that cuts across the history of journalism and can offer an interesting outlook on its development. The roots of this debate are found in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a time in which journalism also experienced a fundamental transformation in terms of how journalists gathered information and represented the world. In this period the emphasis was shifting from an ideological view on the world to an event-centered approach to reality. Within that context factuality became something like a journalistic buzzword and objectivity started playing a role in the debate about journalism. This was accompanied by the emergence of active reporting routines, like on-site observation and interviewing. The development of these routines also infused the rise of novel genres - in the sense of textual formats - such as the reportage and the interview.<sup>6</sup> Especially within the former genre the role of storytelling, narrative techniques and stylistic devices in relation to the reporter's subjectivity are apparent.<sup>7</sup> Yet, the different ways in which journalism dealt with the inherent subjectivity of the

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel, *The elements of journalism. What newspeople should know and the public should expect* (New York: Three Rivers, 2001), 3-6, 38-46, 141-143.

<sup>4</sup> Brian McNair, *Journalism and democracy. An evaluation of the political public sphere*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 9-10; Marcel Broersma, "A Refracted Paradigm. Journalism, hoaxes and the challenge of Trust," in *Rethinking journalism. Trust and Participation in a transformed news landscape*, ed. Chris Peters & Marcel Broersma (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 32-33; Cf. Robert Hackett & Yuehzi Zhao, *Sustaining Democracy?: Journalism and the Politics of Objectivity* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1998), 86.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Schudson, "The objectivity norm in American journalism," *Journalism* 2, no.2 (2001): 150; Stephen Ward, (2004). *The invention of journalism ethics: the path to objectivity and beyond* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 10-14, 19-22.

<sup>6</sup> Svernik Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," in *Diffusion of the News Paradigm 1850-2000*, ed. Svernik Høyer & Horst Pöttker (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2005), 10-13; Marcel Broersma, "Form, Style and Journalistic Strategies," in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News. 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), xiii-xxvii; Jean Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism* (Houndmills/Basingstokes/Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 1998), 127-130; Joel Wiener, "How New Was the New Journalism," in *Papers for the Millions. The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914*, ed. Joel Wiener (New York: Greenwood press, 1988), 50-56.

<sup>7</sup> Myriam Boucharenc, "Petite typologie du grand reportage," in *Littérature et reportage: colloque international de Limoges*, ed. Myriam Boucharenc & Joëlle Deluche (Limoges: Pulim, 2001), 226-228; Jacques Fontanille, "Quand le corps témoigne: voir, entendre, sentir et être-là," in *Littérature et reportage: colloque international de Limoges*, ed. Myriam Boucharenc & Joëlle Deluche (Limoges: Pulim, 2001), 103.

reporter within this context has never been analyzed thoroughly. Many inquiries into journalism history convey a teleological framework in which objectivity is considered the natural standard of journalism. This has shaped these historical narratives and obscured the pluriformity and complexity of the journalistic development in Europe since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The aim of this dissertation is to examine the development of the reportage as a textual genre in relation to the rise of reporting as a new practice in British, Dutch and French newspaper journalism from 1880 to 2005. It analyzes journalism through its textual output from the period when an event-centered mass press was slowly emerging and a corresponding professional framework was developing up until the current period of turmoil journalism is in. In this final period an interplay of the growing commercialization and digitalization and the rise of postmodern ideas about truth and society have caused a reconceptualization of the journalistic foundations that were gradually developing from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This study enables us to understand why the professional practice of journalism in the respective countries developed along different lines. It challenges the suggestion that journalism in Europe uniformly and almost inevitable adopted the objectivity regime as its professional standard. Instead, its findings demonstrate that the journalistic development in Europe actually has been a gradual and highly complex process. It was determined by the competition between alternative conceptions of journalism that took place within the diverging cultural, institutional and commercial contexts of the respective countries.

This dissertation is part of a larger research project, 'Reporting at the Boundaries of the Public Sphere. Form, Style and Strategy of European Journalism, 1880-2005', which focuses on the ideological transformation of European journalism from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Instead of the more common analysis of the assertions journalists make about their occupation, this dissertation examines to what extent these statements are in line with the textual characteristics of newspaper content throughout this period. The project is built on the assumption that textual conventions provide an interesting insight in the way journalism is conceived as a practice. As Barnhurst and Nerone put it: "[a]ny media form includes a proposed or normative model of the medium itself. Put another way, the form includes the way the medium imagines itself to be and to act."<sup>8</sup>

My research in particular scrutinizes the genre of the reportage as a textual format that tries to convey reality by providing the readership with something like a vicarious experience. Its authority resides in the idea that a reporter was on site and witnessed an event or examined it right after it happened. The reportage is therefore intricately related to the development of journalism practice from passively relaying information provided by others to reporting on newsworthy events through on-site observation and interviewing people to elicit information. Examining this genre can therefore elucidate the way reporting as a novel journalism practice triggered new journalistic standards. Moreover, it is able to shed light on the differences between the way journalistic norms have developed in the three countries at hand, which is interesting because it underlines the pluriform ways this shift in journalism practice has been shaped. The genre illustrates how similar reporting routines can be related to conflicting journalistic conceptions. The reportage has for instance been conceptualized as a way of recording reality in a detached and uncolored fashion, but also as a way of expressing an engaged and personalized impression of reality. This genre thus captures the different ways journalists have dealt with the influence of their subjectivity on the reporting process, which can be regarded as one of the major defining issues of journalistic development since the 1880s.

The rise of active reporting routines has often been considered shorthand for the development of the objective regime. Yet, as I argue in this dissertation, its rise is much more gradual than is often

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8 Kevin Barnhurst & John Nerone, *The Form of News: A History* (New York/London: The Guildford Press, 2001), 3.

assumed. The development of the objectivity regime is less unequivocal in the different countries than often posited within journalism historiography. Furthermore, its dominance and self-evidence has been exaggerated. The reign of the objectivity regime is less extensive and more contested by other journalistic conceptions throughout history than is often admitted. This dissertation illustrates this by focusing on the reportage as a genre that, perhaps more than any other, embodies the struggle between competing journalistic conceptions. Accordingly, a primary scholarly contribution of this work is to do greater justice to the complexity and multiformity of the historical development of journalism in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France.

## The rise of a professional framework

Catchphrases like ‘fourth estate’, ‘society’s watchdog’ and the ‘mirror of reality’ have provided (Western) journalism with a convincing justification of the necessity of a free press in democracy. Based on this rationale, journalism has asserted its authority and autonomy within society.<sup>9</sup> From roughly the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards the press landscape was rapidly expanding in all Western countries. Under influence of an interplay of several technological, societal and political developments outside of journalism - which I discuss in greater detail in Chapter IV - journalism gradually gained cultural authority as one of the primary domains for providing a truthful representation of the world. The development of the telegraph and the realization of the transatlantic cable connection, the improving infrastructure within and between countries, the political liberalization of censorship, and the general increase in prosperity (specifically the emergence of an affluent working and lower middle class with some spare time and money on their hands to read newspapers), all played an important role in this development of journalism. These developments, which led to a growing need for a daily supply of newsworthy information about what was happening in the world, contributed strongly to the growing status of journalism in society. Subsequently, journalism gradually transformed into a profitable field of business.<sup>10</sup>

Up until then, newspapers consisted of a large amount of short news messages, but revolved around longer ideologically determined exposés, mostly on foreign affairs, and the economy.<sup>11</sup> The most highly esteemed ‘journalists’ were those writing these reflective articles, and were often not primarily recognized as journalists. Generally, they had a double role and besides working as a journalist, they were also active and best known for their work in the political or literary domain.

9 Schudson, “Objectivity norm,” 149-150; Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 10-14; Colin Sparks, “Introduction. The Panic over Tabloid News,” in *Tabloid Tales. Global Debates over Media Standards*, ed. Colin Sparks & John Tulloch (Lanham/Boulder/New York/Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 3-5; Marcel Broersma, “Journalism as a Performative Discourse. The Importance of Form and Style in Journalism,” in *Journalism and Meaning-making: reading the Newspaper*, ed. Verica Rupar (Cresskill: Hampton Press, 2010), 18.

10 Broersma, “Journalistic strategies,” xvii; Schudson, “Objectivity Norm,” 150-153; Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News. A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 31-43, 101-104; Harlan S. Stensaas, “The Rise of the News Paradigm. A Review of the Scientific Literature,” in *Diffusion of the News Paradigm 1850-2000*, ed. Svennik Høyer & Horst Pöttker (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2005), 42-48; Svennik Høyer, “Rumours of Modernity: How New American Journalism Spread to Europe,” in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 27-30; Huub Wijfjes, “Modernization of Style and Form in Dutch Journalism 1870-1914,” in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 68-71; Cf. Alan Lee, “The Structure, Ownership and Control of the Press, 1855-1914,” in *Newspaper History: from the 17th century to the present day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978), 117-129; Patrick Eveno, *L'argent de la presse française des années 1820 à nos jours* (Paris: CTHS, 2003), 19-26; Marc Martin, *Médias et journalistes de la république* (Paris: Editions Odile Jacob, 1997), 30-31.

11 Cf. Rutger de Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging. Veranderende berichtgeving in kranten en pamfletten (Groningen en 's-Hertogenbosch 1813-1899)* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010), 17, 55-65, 111-117; Kevin Williams, *Read all about it. A history of the British Newspaper* (London/New York: Routledge, 2010), 17-18; Mark Hampton, *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850-1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 9-10; Thomas Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme en France. Naissance de la presse moderne à la fin du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Librairie Plon., 1996), 21-25; Christian Delporte, *Les journalistes en France (1880-1950). Naissance et construction d'une profession* (Paris: Éditions du seuil, 1999), 52-60.

Besides that, a newspaper's authority was also for an important part based on the cultural or political esteem of its sources. In this period, journalism had not yet acquired a distinctive voice and lacked its own particular discursive forms. In covering political debates for instance, journalists transcribed these debates almost verbatim and subsequently strongly relied on the modes of expression of the domain from which the information originated.<sup>12</sup>

With the rise of the mass press in roughly the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this started to change. Journalists assumed autonomy by very gradually delineating their domain from politics and literature. They did so by asserting professional norms in the debate on journalism, by introducing new routines to gather the information needed about newsworthy events, and by employing textual conventions that can be read as markers of their professional values.<sup>13</sup> On the level of norms, the roles and responsibilities of journalists were debated, testifying to a felt need to focus on news events more than on reflection on the news. With regard to routines, journalists gradually became more inclined to leave their desks and go into the streets to gather newsworthy information by on-site observation and interviewing people involved. Finally, journalists were also gradually developing new forms, such as the reportage and the interview, to package the news.<sup>14</sup>

The developments on these three different levels of journalism practice provided an important impetus for the formation of a professional framework. It reinforced the social cohesion and professional ideals journalists needed to gain and ensure their authority as an important knowledge domain within society.<sup>15</sup> Yet, despite the relatively stable popular and academic consensus about journalism's role of providing society's checks and balances, this dissertation reveals that the way in which journalism practice has been shaped historically has been subject to ongoing and heated debates with considerably divergent outcomes in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France. Several journalism scholars have pointed out how the specific institutionalization of press freedom, the degree of commercialization of the media landscape, and how cultural differences, like the perspective on journalism as either an art or a skill, have strongly determined the development of journalism practice and the notion of news in the different European journalistic cultures.<sup>16</sup> This certainly applies to the development of journalism in the three countries examined in this dissertation since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By offering a more refined perspective on the interaction between the three levels of journalism practice (norms, routines, forms) and showing the discrepancies between them, this dissertation demonstrates that the discourse on journalism and its everyday practice not necessarily dovetail. As my results show it can take decades before the conceptions that circulate within the debates on journalism become manifest in everyday practice on a large scale.

Furthermore, within a comparative and historical framework it is important to be cautious in assuming the stability and universality of the meaning of certain terms like 'news', 'factuality' and 'objectivity', which can lead to a false idea of uniformity in the journalistic development within

12 Donald Matheson, "The birth of news discourse: changes in news language in British Newspapers, 1880-1930," *Media, Culture Society* 22 (2000): 562; Laurel Brake, "The Old Journalism and the New: Forms of Cultural Production in London in the 1880s," in *Papers for the Millions. The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914*, ed. Joel Wiener (New York: Greenwood press, 1988), 1-2; Jean Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention: A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s," *European Journal of Communication* 11 (1996): 304-310; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 19-33; Wijffes, "Modernization of Style," 66-68, 72-73, 76-77.

13 Broersma, "Journalistic strategies," xxvi; Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 149-150; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 128-133; Kevin Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism. The Historical Development of Practice, Style and Form," in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 10-13.

14 Cf. Broersma, "Journalistic strategies," xxiii-xxviii.

15 Cf. Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 151-152, 156-158.

16 Cf. Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 166-167; Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 214; Daniel Hallin & Paolo Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 8-15, 66-75; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 14-23.

different countries. 'News' for instance proves to be very slippery. It can refer to a particular genre in the newspaper or to a specific broadcast format, but also to newsworthy information in general. Moreover, what the typical features of an article or item should be to be considered news are subject to historical and cultural differences and cannot be treated as a stable notion throughout history. This thesis has attempted to pick apart these broad notions to clarify the nature of the journalistic development within different historical contexts.

## The grand narrative of journalism history

The pluriformity and dynamic nature of journalism practice throughout history has not received the attention and acknowledgement it deserves. All too often the growing emphasis on news and the development of active reporting routines are explicitly or implicitly regarded as signs of the emergence of the objectivity regime. Yet news is somewhat of a container notion and active reporting routines do not necessarily infer objectivity. While it might be easy to subsume that the relation between the norms that are formulated in the debate about journalism directly infuse the routines that are employed as well as the characteristics of journalistic texts, this dissertation argues that their relation is not as clear-cut and instrumental as often assumed. The asserted professional norms about journalism are not necessarily translated perfectly into corresponding routines and textual forms, but also serve a strategic purpose for journalists in assuming an advantageous position within the journalistic domain or to set themselves off vis-à-vis other domains. The norms journalists rely on in such cases sometimes only partially reflect the actual routines and forms. The norms, routines, and textual conventions should thus not be conceived as directly determining each other. They are related and often influence each other reciprocally, but there can certainly be incongruities between them.

Most research into (comparative) journalism history has disregarded this dynamic perspective on the development of journalism practice, and norms, routines and forms are all too often discussed as if they are inextricably and instrumentally tied to each other. For instance, in their volume on comparative European journalism history Svennik Høyer and Horst Pöttker coin the term 'news paradigm' to refer to the rise of a professional journalism practice in which active reporting routines and a focus on the 'bare' facts are seen as the expression of the emergence of the objectivity norm.<sup>17</sup> Especially, the role of objectivity is overemphasized in this early period in journalism history as the notion was only just emerging within the debate about journalism and often only to be critiqued for its bland and mechanic way of doing journalism. Moreover, it is fairly rigidly tied to the emerging active reporting routines.<sup>18</sup> My critique does not mean that objectivity is not an important notion within this context; it has even been argued that without the concept of objectivity, journalism in the Western countries cannot be grasped properly.<sup>19</sup> According to Kevin Williams, even in the cultures in which the objectivity norm was contested, it has at the least acted as an important frame of reference in the debate about journalism practice.<sup>20</sup> Its large impact is in part the result of the wide acceptance - by journalists and scholars alike - of the claim that the objectivity regime is a necessary occupational

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 10-14.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Michael Schudson & Chris Anderson, "Objectivity, Professionalism, and Truth Seeking in Journalism," in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, ed. Karin Wahl-Jorgenson & Thomas Hanitsch (New York/London: Routledge, 2009), 88-101.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Juan Muñoz-Torres, "Truth and Objectivity in Journalism: Anatomy of an Endless Misunderstanding," *Journalism Studies* 13, no.4 (2012): 567.

<sup>20</sup> Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 17; Also see: Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 151-152, 161-165; Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 33-34, 256-257.

framework to facilitate journalism's role as society's watchdog.<sup>21</sup>

Although objectivity as a notion has thus played a central role in the research into journalism history, because of its ubiquity it is not always carefully delineated when used in the existing historiography.<sup>22</sup> In this dissertation, I advocate for a more precise understanding and operationalization of the term and the way it is used in the different historical contexts. I consider objectivity in journalism as the translation of a philosophical ideal concerning epistemology into a set of practical norms, routines, and conventions that are believed to ensure truthful and trustworthy coverage. In her seminal research, Gaye Tuchman has characterized it as a strategic ritual to establish journalism's credibility as a domain of truth.<sup>23</sup> This objectivity regime, rooted as it is in the idea of disinterested rationalism in which ideals like factuality, independence, impartiality and detachment are prevalent, has played an important role in the emergence of journalism's occupational identity.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, it has provided structure to the socialization process of journalists with regard to the way information should be gathered and how this information has to be written down. The norms above relate to the everyday practice of gathering, researching and verifying information, balancing sources, separating fact from opinion and refraining from any opinionated or colored elements. Within an article such a practice is signaled by the use of the inverted pyramid, in which the most important facts are provided first, the attribution of sources, the integration of direct quotations, the use of a third person perspective and the minimization of colored descriptions that suggest a certain partiality.<sup>25</sup> It offers a uniform recipe of the way journalistic texts are created, which enables the division of labor.<sup>26</sup> Such a set of shared journalistic procedures aimed at filtering out all subjective elements of the reporter, makes it relatively unimportant who writes the story. Reporters become a cog in a larger machine, which makes the individuality of a specific reporter secondary to the production of the total newspaper. This is also the reason why editors and subeditors, keeping track of the larger process, gained prominence within journalism governed by the objectivity regime.<sup>27</sup>

Still, such a socialization process cannot be assumed to be in place, only because journalists subscribe to objectivity in the debate about journalism. The analysis of the norms journalists have asserted should be compared to the examination of journalistic texts. Without the latter it is not possible to see to what extent journalists indeed adhered to these norms in their articles. This dissertation shows for instance that around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century journalists in France were moving towards a more event-centered approach to the news, but did not embrace the objectivity regime. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century French journalists kept on presenting reality by conveying their subjective experiences. As French journalism scholar Ruellan has put it:

Unlike the 'American' reportage (or rather its caricature), it [the reportage in France, FH] is not one of the latest avatars of a positivist perspective on the world, which believes that you don't know what kind of devotion to the facts results in a definitive understanding of the complexity. On the contrary, it is a creative effort that is marked by the presence of the author, in which subjectivity is

21 Cf. Gaye Tuchman, "Objectivity as a strategic ritual: An examination of newsmen's notions of objectivity," *American Journal of Sociology* 77, no.4 (1972): 675-677; Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 5-6; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 24-29; Horst Pöttker, "Perspectives on the Development of the News Paradigm. The Quest for Autonomy," in *The Diffusion of the News Paradigm 1850-2000*, ed. Sverre Høyer & Horst Pöttker (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2005), 264-272.

22 Cf. Muñoz-Torres, "Truth and Objectivity," 568-571; Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 22.

23 Cf. Tuchman, "Strategic Ritual," 661-664.

24 Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 11-19.

25 Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 20-21; Schudson, "Objectivity Norm," 149-150; David Mindich, *Just the Facts. How "Objectivity" Came to Define American Journalism* (New York/London: New York University Press, 1998), 8-10.

26 Cf. Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 151-152, 162-163.

27 Cf. Tuchman, "Strategic Ritual," 661-664.

a given foundation of the production process, irreversible and inevitable.<sup>28</sup>

This also manifested itself in a stronger authorial autonomy of the journalists with regard to their articles, thwarting the rise of the division of labor. I will therefore reserve the term 'news paradigm' to refer to a change in the journalistic routines from reflective desk-bound journalism to event-centered reporting; a change that is not necessarily connected to the objectivity regime.

For that reason, press historians often discern an opposition between the Anglo-American and the continental journalistic tradition, in which the former is seen as the real representative of the objectivity regime and the latter as being much more determined by reflective i.e. opinionated and subjectively colored journalism.<sup>29</sup> However, scholars like Schudson, Ward and Hampton have nuanced the adherence of British journalism to the objectivity paradigm and criticized the assumed uniformity of 'Anglo-American journalism'.<sup>30</sup> As Schudson has formulated it British journalism can better be seen as a "half-way house between American professionalism and continental traditions of party-governed journalism with high literary aspirations."<sup>31</sup>

## Focusing on the journalistic text

The exaggeration of the differences between the European countries and the overemphasis of the objectivity regime and the pace with which it developed, can in part be ascribed to the research tradition of press historians. All too often an instrumental perspective on the relation between norms, routines and textual conventions is embraced, analyzing which norms journalists have asserted and take the routines and certainly the textual conventions for granted. Moreover, it seems that many press historians seem to subscribe to the dominant professional framework of contemporary journalism i.e. the objectivity regime. In their analyses, they acknowledge the self-evidence of the objectivity regime as the professional standard, which results in a teleological depiction of journalism history.

Most of these press histories have focused mainly on the institutional and commercial development of the press landscape, on the development of a professional framework, or a combination of both. Through the analysis of circulation numbers, the amount of advertisement revenues, patterns of ownership, or by scrutinizing the minutes or reports of editorial meetings or press unions, contemporary memoirs and (auto) biographies of journalists, they try to elucidate how journalism was and is organized and how it acquired its authoritative and autonomous position within society.<sup>32</sup> This has resulted in studies that implicitly or explicitly adopt a perspective on journalism history in which the importance of the objectivity regime as a professional framework is overemphasized.<sup>33</sup> Such an approach is justified by pointing to the overabundance of newspaper material, and the time-consuming archival work to find and analyze it.<sup>34</sup> However, such research

<sup>28</sup> Denis Ruellan, *Le journalism ou le professionnalisme du flou* (Grenoble: Presse universitaire de Grenoble, 2007), 115.

<sup>29</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 313-323; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 14-21; Broersma, "Journalistic strategies," xv-xix; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 14-15, 38-42.

<sup>30</sup> Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 167; Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 214; Mark Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal and its limitations in 20<sup>th</sup> century British Journalism," *Journalism Studies* 9, no.4 (2008), 477-478.

<sup>31</sup> Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 167.

<sup>32</sup> Good examples of this are: George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate, *Newspaper History: from the 17th century to the present day* (London: Constable, 1978); Martin, *Médias et journalistes*; Huub Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland 1850-2000. Beroep, cultuur en organisatie* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2004).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Marcel Broersma, "From Press History to the History of Journalism. National and Transnational Features of Dutch Scholarship," *Medien & Zeit* 26, no. 3 (2011): 18-22.

<sup>34</sup> Marcel Broersma, "Nooit meer bladeren? Digitale krantenarchieven als bron," *Digitale archieven. Themanummer Tijdschrift voor Mediageschiedenis* 14, no.2 (2011): 32-34.

conveys either the development of journalism as a business, or, as Broersma has pointed out, shows a self-image of journalists, rather than offering insight in the changes of the actual newspaper content.<sup>35</sup> A systematic and representative analysis of journalistic texts thus remains wanting.<sup>36</sup>

For this exact reason, this dissertation aims to contribute to the gradually growing effort of filling this gap in existing research. Previously, such an analysis would be exceptionally labor intensive. However, the combination of the recent progress in the digitization of historical newspapers and the manpower the encompassing research project could provide, made it possible to deal with the vast amount of primary research material. This material was addressed through an innovative approach in which qualitative and quantitative research methods were fruitfully combined to analyze the extent to which the emergence of an event-centered journalism practice and the accompanying professional norms of objectivity could be seen to be borne out empirically in practice. My inquiry into journalism history is therefore based on a longitudinal and comparative analysis of the textual conventions of journalism in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France from the 1880s onwards. Throughout the entire dissertation the results of this analysis will be compared and related to the existing research into norms and routines and to previous studies into the institutional context as well. Comparing the discourse on journalism practice with the characteristics of the textual output sheds new light on the development of journalism in the three respective countries; the self-image journalists have put forward is compared to the actual characteristics of their work. It demonstrates the pluriformity of the journalistic development and suggests the complex and dynamic interaction between developments on the level of the institutional environment, journalistic norms, routines and textual conventions.

## Criticizing the normative perspective on journalism history

This dissertation thus takes issue with a depiction of journalism history, in which the objectivity regime is accepted as the alpha and omega of journalism practice. It seems that the legitimizing power of journalistic objectivity, which has been asserted by many journalists to gain and maintain authority and autonomy, has also been accepted and internalized by many journalism scholars and press historians. Over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the professional framework of the objectivity regime has developed into a self-evident Archimedean point for press historians. It often acts as a historical model that has become the cornerstone of most analyses and assessments of the historic development of journalism.<sup>37</sup> Depending on the moment of manifestation, diverging conceptions of journalism practice are perceived either as typical for an inferior prelude to this framework or as new developments in the practice of journalism that are detrimental to the quality of journalism and undermine its role in society. The objectivity regime has thus become so influential that its normative roots have come to be effaced, and its conception of journalism is subsequently presented as self-evident. This 'grand narrative' of journalism history has obscured the pluriformity in the development of journalism in Europe, fails to acknowledge the influence and value of alternative

35 Broersma, "Press History," 18-23; Broersma, "Journalistic strategies," xi; cf. David Weaver & Lars Willnatt, "Journalists in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Conclusions," in *The Global Journalist in the 21st Century*, ed. David Weaver & Lars Willnatt (New York: Routledge, 2012), 549.

36 A few exceptions to this rule are: Marcel Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang. De wereld van de Leeuwarder Courant 1752-2002* (Leeuwarden: Friese Pers Boekerij, 2002); De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*; Nicola Hubé, *Décrocher la une : le choix des titres de première page de la presse quotidienne en France et en Allemagne (1945-2005)* (Strasbourg: Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2008); Richard Kaplan, *Politics and the American Press. The Rise of Objectivity, 1865-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

37 Broersma, "Press history," 23-24; Frank Harbers & Bas den Herder, "On the spot. New ways of Reporting in British and Dutch Newspaper Journalism 1925-2005," *Medien & Zeit* 25, no.4 (2010): 31; Schudson & Anderson, "Objectivity, Professionalism," 88-89.



conceptions of journalism, and too often assumes these developments in journalistic texts without systematic empirical enquiry.<sup>38</sup>

A good example is the pejorative term ‘tabloidization’, which is often used by scholars and journalists alike to characterize recent developments in journalism. Instead of carefully analyzing the intricately related array of developments in journalism practice - which point to a reconceptualization of the professional framework of journalism in which the elements that denote journalistic quality are changing, as I discuss more elaborately in chapters X and XI - the notion of tabloidization conflates all these developments and regards them solely as evidence of the deterioration of journalism practice; quality journalism is believed to have fallen prey to more ‘popular’ forms of journalism. The use of this notion fails to acknowledge the ongoing social process of negotiation about the quality standards in journalism. It subsequently disregards the ongoing interaction between ‘quality’ and ‘popular’ journalism.<sup>39</sup> In this thesis I demonstrate how quality and popular journalism intricately interact and together negotiate the boundaries of journalism discourse and the accepted professional standards. Quality dailies play an important role in determining the discursive boundaries for the popular press, whereas the commercial success of the popular dailies has often influenced the quality press to revalue and incorporate popular elements within its journalism practice.

The inadequacy of the tabloidization perspective becomes clear by highlighting the recent popularity of personal experience and emotion in which the norms of the objectivity regime are less stringently enforced or even questioned. This trend entails an increasing focus on the private lives of celebrities, a more bottom-up approach towards political or social-economic issues, highlighting their direct impact on common people and conveying how they experience such circumstances, and the use of storytelling techniques in journalistic coverage.<sup>40</sup> The notion of tabloidization makes hardly any distinction between the different manifestations of personalization and rejects them categorically as forms of superficial ‘soft news’. This essentialist perspective considers the objectivity regime as self-evident professional standard, thereby disregarding the possibility of such textual conventions within a quality journalistic framework. As a result tabloidization creates a false binary between ‘hard’ i.e. quality journalism and ‘soft’ i.e. superficial or popular journalism. Consequently, the notion ignores the shared characteristics between quality and popular journalism, and does not acknowledge the dynamic nature of quality standards, something I discuss in greater detail in chapters X and XI.

## The multiformity of European journalism history

In the last two decades new scholarly perspectives on journalistic development have been formulated that depart from centering the analysis of journalistic developments around the objectivity regime.<sup>41</sup> However, the development of journalism from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward is also

<sup>38</sup> Marcel Broersma, “Transnational Journalism History. Balancing Global Universals and National Peculiarities,” *Medien & Zeit* 25, no.4 (2011): 13-14; Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 23-25; Broersma, “Nooit meer bladeren,” 34.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Bob Franklin, “Introduction,” in *The Future of Newspapers*, ed. Bob Franklin (New York: Routledge, 2009), 1-12; Marcel Broersma, “De waarheid in tijden van crisis. Kwaliteitsjournalistiek in een veranderend medialandschap,” in *Journalistiek in diskrediet*, ed. Bert Ummelen (Diemen: AMB, 2009), 23-40; Marcel Broersma, *De Associatiemaatschappij. Journalistieke stijl en de onthechte nieuwsconsument* (inaugural speech, 17 March, 2009), [www.rug.nl/staff/m.j.broersma/Oratie\\_MarcelBroersma\\_170309.pdf](http://www.rug.nl/staff/m.j.broersma/Oratie_MarcelBroersma_170309.pdf); Steen Steensen, “The Featurization of Journalism,” *Nordicom Review* 32, no. 2 (2011): 49-50; Sparks, “Introduction,” 1-40.

<sup>40</sup> Frank Harbers, “Different Forms of Featurized Journalism. The Collaboration of *NRC Handelsblad* and Arnon Grunberg,” in *Retelling Journalism*, ed. Chris Peters & Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 3-26; Steensen, “Featurization,” 49-50.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Liesbeth van Zoonen, “I-Pistemology: Changing truth claims in popular and political culture,” *European Journal of Communication* 27, no.1 (2012): 56-67; Chris Peters, “Emotion aside or emotional side? Crafting an ‘experience of involvement’ in the news,” *Journalism* 12, no.3 (2011): 297-316; Barbie Zelizer, “Introduction: Why Journalism’s Changing Faces Matter,” in *The Changing Faces of Journalism. Tabloidization, Technology, Truthiness* (London/New York: Routledge, 2009), 1-9.

much more multiform than is often suggested.<sup>42</sup> This assumption forms the starting point of the broader research project and of my dissertation in particular. The image of a journalism in Europe that rapidly adopted the objectivity regime as the necessary and self-evident professional framework to enable journalism's role as the watchdog of society disregards the multiformity of the developments. Journalism history in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France should much rather be regarded as a continuous culturally-specific struggle and interplay between different conceptions of journalism.<sup>43</sup> It also shows the important influence of the specific institutional and social organization of the development of journalism.<sup>44</sup>

The pluralistic development of European journalism has not received the attention it deserves, obscuring this complex struggle over professional practices and quality standards that have shaped journalistic development in Europe since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. First of all, journalism is seldomly examined in its international context. Most research has mainly concentrated on the journalistic development within one particular country. The attention focused on situating the journalistic developments internationally is in such cases only marginal. The few examples of such comparisons consist mostly of a series of chapters, each concentrating on the press history of one nation in particular.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, these series of press histories assume the coherence of the national journalistic culture instead of problematizing it. Journalism history should be analyzed as a continuous struggle for prominence between competing conceptions of journalism, which can have different outcomes depending on time and culture.

The synthesizing cross-national design of the research project fits in with growing attention for more comparative research into journalism (history), which Karin Wahl-Jorgenson and Thomas Hanitsch have termed the "global-comparative turn in journalism studies".<sup>46</sup> By not considering it automatically as the natural unit of analysis, the national level is taken off of its pedestal. This offers a more dynamic perspective on the processes of exchange between journalistic cultures, which may or may not be nationally-constrained.<sup>47</sup>

Examining the development of journalism within Great Britain, the Netherlands and France offers an interesting comparison, because the institutional organization of their press landscapes fits in with the typification of the Western-European and Northern American media systems by Hallin and Mancini. They discern a liberal, a democratic-corporatist, and a polarized-pluralist model, roughly corresponding to respectively Anglo-American, Northern European and Mediterranean countries. In this case each country represents a different model.<sup>48</sup> Such institutional differences simultaneously

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xi; Michael Schudson, "Would Journalism please hold still!," in *Rethinking Journalism. Trust and participation in a transformed news landscape*, ed. Chris Peters & Marcel Broersma (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 199.

<sup>43</sup> Broersma, "Performative discourse," 23-24.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Rodney Benson, R. & Erik Neveu, "Introduction: Field Theory as a Work in Progress," in *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, ed. Rodney Benson & Erik Neveu (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 2-7; For an elaborate discussion of the connection between field and discourse, see: Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 32-53.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Svernik Høyer & Horst Pöttker, *Diffusion of the News Paradigm 1850-2000* (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2005); Ross F. Collins & E.M. Palmegiano, *The Rise of Western Journalism, 1815-1914* (Jefferson/London: McFarland & Company, 2007).

<sup>46</sup> Karin Wahl-Jorgenson & Thomas Hanitsch, "Introduction: On Why and How We Should Do Journalism Studies," in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, ed. Karin Wahl-Jorgenson & Thomas Hanitsch (New York/London: Routledge, 2009), 6-7.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Patricia Clavin, "Defining Transnationalism," *Contemporary European History* 14, no.4 (2005): 421-439; Heinz-Gerhardt Haupt & Jürgen Kocka, "Comparative history: Methods, Aims, Problems," in *Comparison and history: Europe in cross-national perspective*, ed. D. Cohen et al. (New York, Routledge, 2004), 23-39; Andreas Hepp, "Transculturality as a perspective: Researching Media Cultures Comparatively," *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 10, no.1 (2009), [www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1221/2657](http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1221/2657).

<sup>48</sup> Daniel Hallin, Daniel & Paolo Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 10-13.

reflect as well as influence the development of the respective journalism practices.<sup>49</sup>

The press landscape of Great Britain is characterized by an early acquisition of press freedom and a mass-circulation press. From early on the journalistic domain has been dominated by commercial newspapers that focus on the facts and do not have a specific ideological orientation.<sup>50</sup> Journalism is highly professionalized and although the ties between journalism and politics are also clearly present, the early commercialization of the press landscape resulted in a low degree of political parallelism. The latter can also be partially attributed to its primarily two-party system (compared to the multi-party systems in the Netherlands and France), and the weaker position of the church.<sup>51</sup> Although Great-Britain shares a considerable commentary tradition with the democratic-corporatist system<sup>52</sup>, it does have most of the characteristics of the liberal system, and within the European context it is the most obvious example.<sup>53</sup>

The Netherlands fits in with the democratic-corporatist model, because of the somewhat dual nature of its press landscape. On the one hand, the Dutch press can be typified by the early acquisition of press freedom, a commercial press, and high newspaper circulation. On the other hand, it is also characterized by a strong ideologically oriented journalistic tradition.<sup>54</sup> The press landscape historically reflects the pillarized society and political landscape, and although this parallelism has been fading since roughly the 1970s, the general political and religious or social ideologies are still to a certain extent reflected in the supply of newspaper titles.<sup>55</sup> The state has played, and to a lesser extent still plays, an important role in the support and regulation of the media. It does so by: subsidizing public broadcasting; subsidizing insolvent dailies, which thus counters the effects the increasing press concentration might have on a pluralistic media landscape; and by allocating funds to stimulate in-depth reporting or assist the budding careers of young journalists.<sup>56</sup> Nonetheless, the degree of journalistic professionalization and autonomy is high as well.<sup>57</sup>

France, finally, is characterized by a strong connivance between journalism and politics, and also between journalism and literature for that matter.<sup>58</sup> The press landscape strongly reflects the political landscape. Furthermore, France obtained press freedom relatively late, and the commercialization of the press has always been relatively weak.<sup>59</sup> Due to the latter, newspapers often have a hard time surviving financially and on many occasions they have had to revert to state subsidies. As a result the independence of journalism within France is limited, and professionalization has not

49 Pierre Bourdieu, "The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field," in *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, ed. Rodney Benson & Erik Neveu (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 30-35; Cf. Rodney Benson, "How States, Markets and Globalization Shape the News The French and US National Press, 1965-97," *European Journal of Communication* 22, no.1 (2007): 28-29; Rodney Benson, "Mapping Field Variation: Journalism in France and the United States," in *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, ed. Rodney Benson & Erik Neveu (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 95-100; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 318-322.

50 Cf. Jean Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 41-48, 84, 130-140; Jean Chalaby, "Journalism and the two industrial revolutions," in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 235-237.

51 Cf. Jean Chalaby, "No ordinary press owners: press barons as a Weberian ideal type," *Media, Culture & Society* 19, no. 4 (1997): 623-624; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 319-320; Hampton, *Visions*, 53.

52 Cf. Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 166-167.

53 Cf. Hallin & Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 198-248.

54 Cf. Wijffjes, "Modernization of Style," 62.

55 Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 330.

56 Hans van Kranenburg, "De dagbladsector en de Nederlandse overheid," *Maandblad voor Accountancy en Bedrijfseconomie* 73, no.11 (1999): 618-621; See also: [www.persinnovatie.nl/](http://www.persinnovatie.nl/).

57 Cf. Hallin & Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 143-197.

58 Ross Collins, "Traitorous Collaboration: The Press in France, 1815-1914," in *The Rise of Western Journalism, 1815-1914. Essays on the Press in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States*, ed. Ross Collins & E.M. Palmegiano (Jefferson/London: McFarland & Company, 2007), 4, 82-83; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 27-29; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 52-60; Rodney Benson, "The political/literary model of French journalism: change and continuity in immigration news coverage, 1973-1991," *Journal of European Area Studies* 10, no.1 (2002): 53-56.

59 Cf. Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 16-17, 61-63, 70-73; Collins, "Traitorous collaboration," 71-105.

developed as strongly compared to the other models. Journalism has long been a necessary step in the course of becoming either a politician or a literary writer.<sup>60</sup> France is regarded by Hallin and Mancini as a half-way house between the democratic-corporatist and the polarized-pluralist model, because of a stronger commercialization of the media, and a rather high newspaper circulation compared to countries like Spain or Greece.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, France is an important and interesting country to research, because “French journalism was in many ways the paradigm case on which the journalism of the region [Southern Europe, FH] was based.”<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, the choice for France is especially interesting from a transnational perspective, because its journalistic domain has always had more connections and exchanges with the British and Dutch journalistic culture than the other Southern-European countries.<sup>63</sup>

This dissertation shows that these political, institutional and commercial differences have irrefutably contributed to the variations in the development of journalism in the respective countries. However, I argue that in most press histories the institutional developments of the press have almost entirely determined the image of the discursive development of the press without venturing into a systematic analysis of the journalistic texts.

## Reporting as a new practice

In addition to the comparative perspective of the broader project, the focus of this thesis in particular is on the development of the reportage in British, Dutch and French journalism history, systematically mapping the similarities and differences in this respect between as well as within these countries. This can be seen as a modest attempt to address James Carey’s call for a history of “the form of the report”.<sup>64</sup> It gives a detailed depiction of the multiform way reporting has developed within the three European countries by examining the form.

Much prior research into this issue fails to do justice to the complexity of the journalistic development.<sup>65</sup> The image of the transformation of journalism practice between roughly 1880 and 1920 in Western countries is too often presented as a smooth transition in which partisan or reflective journalism was replaced by a journalism practice rooted in active reporting routines emphasizing factuality.<sup>66</sup> This shift is often tied to the rise of the objectivity regime.<sup>67</sup> The reflective journalism practice mainly entailed reflection on the world by desk-bound journalists, who valued and valorized intellectually complexity, eloquence, and a literary writing style.<sup>68</sup> The mediating subjectivity of the journalist stood overtly at the center of this journalism practice.<sup>69</sup> According to the grand narrative, the passive journalistic routines were quickly abandoned in favor of a journalism practice in which

60 Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 27-29.

61 Cf. Hallin & Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 90-106.

62 Hallin & Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 90.

63 Hallin & Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 92; Ferenczi, *L'invention*, 14-15, 36-38, 41-42.

64 James Carey, “The problem of journalism history,” *Journalism History* 1 (1974): 27, cited in: Kevin Barnhurst & John Nerone, “Journalism History,” in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, ed. Karin Wahl-Jorgenson & Thomas Hanitsch (New York/London: Routledge, 2009), 25.

65 Broersma, “Journalistic Strategies,” xi.

66 Cf. Matheson, “Birth of News Discourse,” 560-566; Wiener, “How New,” 52-54; E.M. Palmegiano, “The ‘Fourth Estate’,” British Journalism in Britain’s Century,” in *The Rise of Western Journalism, 1815-1914. Essays on the Press in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States*, ed. Ross Collins & E.M. Palmegiano (Jefferson/London: McFarland & Company, 2007), 142; Wijffjes, “Modernization of Style,” 71-75; Marc Martin, *Les grands reporters. Les débuts du journalisme moderne* (Paris: Louis Audibert, 2005), 10-13, 21-23.

67 Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 127-133; Matheson, “Birth of News Discourse,” 557-558; Broersma, “Journalistic Strategies,” xiv-xvii; Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 23-25.

68 Broersma, “Journalistic Strategies,” xv; Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 13; Mark Hampton, “‘Understanding Media’: theories of the press in Britain, 1850-1914,” *Media Culture Society* 23, no.2 (2001): 215-218.

69 Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 309-312.

reporters went into the streets to actively gather news by observing and investigating events deemed newsworthy and interviewing the people involved.<sup>70</sup>

Although this image reflects roughly what happened, it is a considerable oversimplification of the pluriform historical development of journalistic development in Europe.<sup>71</sup> The complexity of the changes in journalism practice is perhaps best embodied in the development of the reportage, which emerged in intricate relation to the active, on-site reporting routines. Nonetheless, due to the pivotal role of the subject of the journalist the genre shows that it is also tributary to the reflective tradition.<sup>72</sup> By analyzing the textual characteristics of the reportage throughout journalism history against the background of the changing textual characteristics of newspapers in general, this dissertation criticizes and nuances the image of the objectivity regime as the self-evident dominant professional framework within journalism in Europe. It situates the rise of the news paradigm, with its event-centered journalism, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but shows the divergent ways in which it was conceptualized in the three countries. Furthermore, my research suggests that the objectivity regime only manifested itself on a large scale in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For a much longer period than usually acknowledged, a more subjective and reflective form of journalism, which had dominated journalism throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, remained influential and existed alongside the emerging event-centered journalism, or was mixed with it.

In order to gain insight the dynamics of the journalistic development throughout the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, Broersma has discerned three ideal-typical conceptions of journalism: 1) reflective journalism, 2) event-centered information journalism and 3) event-centered story journalism. These ideal types are not bound to a particular historical period, and therefore should not be seen as consecutive phases in the development of journalism. Instead, this categorization conveys three important fields of tension within journalism practice that have shaped journalism throughout this period: the opposition between fact and opinion, between subjective experience and objective facts, and between information and entertainment.<sup>73</sup> These ideal types should be regarded as sensitizing concepts, which can clarify the different discursive tendencies within journalism history. The latter two types both find their roots in the rise of the news paradigm, but have developed a different rationale and focus.

Reflective journalism can be typified as an ideologically-oriented journalism practice, centering on views and analysis, aiming to enlighten and uplift its public. Conversely, event-centered information journalism envisions itself as a rational practice, which is independent from both the political domain as well as commercial incentives, and is subsequently regarded as a highly professionalized occupation. Journalists adhere to the objectivity regime, and pursue a factual, impartial, and detached type of journalism. Finally, event-centered story journalism shares its focus on the factual representation of the event with the former. However, its journalism practice is to a large extent determined by the taste of the readers and advertisers. It attempts to appeal to the

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 10-14; Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 560-566; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 127-129; Martin, *Grands reporters*, 10-13.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Hampton, "Understanding media," 215-218; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 15-17; James Startt, "Good journalism in the era of the new journalism: the British press, 1902-1914," in *Papers for the Millions. The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914*, ed. Joel Wiener (New York/Westport/London: Greenwood Press, 1988), 275-279; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xi; Géraldine Muhlmann, *A Political History of Journalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 17.

<sup>72</sup> Wijffes, "Modernization of Style," 71-78; Delporte, *Les Journalistes*, 60-64; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 77-82; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 99-100; Muhlmann, *Political History*, 17.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Michael Chudson, *Discovering the News. A Social History of American Newspapers*, (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 91-120; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 11, 19; John Tulloch, "The eternal reoccurrence of new journalism," in *Tabloid Tales. Global Debates over Media Standards*, ed. Colin Sparks & John Tulloch (Lanham/Boulder/New York/Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 132-134; Startt, "Good journalism," 275-279; Svennik Høyer, "Rumours of Modernity," 32-33.

readership by focusing more on storytelling elements like personal experiences and emotions, which takes away from the rationalized way of reporting.<sup>74</sup> From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards these three conceptions competed with each other for prominence. How journalism was shaped concretely, and which conception dominated, varies both historically and culturally, and the data presented in this dissertation indeed suggest a much more multiform development of journalism in Europe. By focusing on the textual conventions of journalism, it thus provides an important adjustment of the stereotypical image of the journalistic developments in these countries.

## The reportage: a pivotal genre

The close connection between the routines of reporting and the genre of the reportage is reflected in the lexical kinship of both terms. However, this resemblance has caused terminological confusion as well, which can be explained by the different way genre is conceived within journalism in the Anglo-American world and continental Europe respectively. Whereas in the former a genre refers to the practice centered around a certain topic or 'beat', within the latter a genre refers to a particular way of structuring a text, which cuts across topics.<sup>75</sup> Hartsock makes a fruitful distinction between 'topical genres' and 'modal genres', where the former links up to the Anglo-American conception of genre and the latter to the continental European notion.<sup>76</sup>

This divergent perspective on genre can also be discerned in the term 'reportage'. On the European continent the word 'reportage' gradually came to refer to a specific class of journalistic texts, instead of the underlying practice of reporting. Within the Anglo-American context however the term has maintained a closer connection to the underlying routine.<sup>77</sup> The English 'reportage' is used in two capacities. As the Merriam-Webster dictionary indicates, it can refer to the entire aggregate of journalistic texts that is the result of reporting making the term synonymous with the word 'coverage'. Reportage can however also refer to the eyewitness accounts of journalists.<sup>78</sup> This second meaning already comes closer to the continental European usage of the word, but it is not as clearly delineated. The difference is also reflected in the way linguistic characteristics of the word 'reportage'. In English it is a mass noun, whereas on the European continent the word is a count noun, making it a quantifiable concept. It is thus possible to categorize one specific article as 'a reportage', or several articles belonging to this genre as 'a set of reportages'. When I use the term 'reportage' it will be in its continental capacity.

The genre derives its journalistic authority from the on-site presence of the reporter who either witnessed a certain event or explored the situation right after an event has occurred.<sup>79</sup> This generally results in a detailed restaging of the newsworthy event, which shows clear similarities with the report (*verslag* in Dutch, *compte rendu* in French), a genre that provides a dry listing of the chain of events or a verbatim recount of a political debate for instance.<sup>80</sup> However, the attention for the atmosphere and the people involved clearly distinguishes the reportage from the report. In the reportage a

<sup>74</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xv-xvii.

<sup>75</sup> Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 22.

<sup>76</sup> Hartsock, "Literary Journalism" 13.

<sup>77</sup> Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 22; Frank Harbers, "Between Fact and Fiction: Arnon Grunberg on his Literary Journalism," *Literary Journalism Studies* 2, no.1 (2010): 74.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reportage](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reportage); John Carey, "Introduction," in *The Faber Book of Reportage*, ed. John Carey (Boston/London: Faber & Faber, 1987), xxix-xxx.

<sup>79</sup> Martin Kött, *Das Interview in der französischen Presse. Geschichte und Gegenwart einer journalistischen Textsorte* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2004), 86; Fontanille, "Quand le corps témoigne," 89-92; Michael Haller, *Die Reportage. Ein Handbuch für Journalisten*, (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 1987), 19-20, 27.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 112-113; Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 172-174.

reporter - tacitly or not - lends his or her senses to the reader.<sup>81</sup> The moments of concrete observation, which form the essential element of the genre, are often interspersed with analytic parts in which the event or situation is contextualized by incorporating background information or reflection.<sup>82</sup> The latter connects the genre to the background analysis as well, but the reportage differs from this genre because these analytic passages are subsidiary to the restaging of the concrete event instead of the other way around.

What thus characterizes the genre is that it restages an event or situation by not only giving the facts, but also rendering atmosphere. For this reason Kött talks about “a chronologic-*atmospheric* depiction of events” [my italics, FH].<sup>83</sup> Ultimately the vital characteristic of the reportage is that it attempts to provide the reader with a vicarious experience of an event or situation.<sup>84</sup> In other words, a reportage aims to convey to the reader how it was like to experience a certain event, and how the direct environment reacted on this event.

[The] decisive characteristic of the reportage [...] is [...] the authenticity of the texts, which enables the reader to experience and relive the story through the eyes of the author.<sup>85</sup>

It thus shows reality in its interaction with someone's consciousness.

I am well aware that the emphasis on the reportage affects my description of journalism history. Yet, because my analysis of this specific genre is embedded in a broader inquiry into the more general development of journalism, I am able to discount and contextualize the particular discursive characteristics of the genre that could imbalance my analysis. What is much more important and makes the development of the genre so insightful as an object of study is its chameleon-like character. Throughout history, the way the genre is delineated has been adapted to the journalistic standards within a certain period. The reportage therefore embodies the struggle between the different takes on journalism. The pivotal role of on-site observation and interviewing in this genre enables it to integrate the most important features of the objectivity regime, but the importance of the presence of the reporter also invites accounts that convey reality filtered through the journalist's mediating subjectivity.

Throughout history and culture the focus of the reportage alternates between these two positions, which are sometimes fused together. The form of the reportage has therefore ranged from a recap of a highly personal experience in which the journalist is clearly present, to a more detached and depersonalized description and sometimes also more analytical account, in which the journalist is invisible like the proverbial fly on the wall.<sup>86</sup> In such instances the genre is stretched to its limits, moving closer to genres like the report or the analysis, but maintains its key characteristic of providing direct on-site observations. Exactly because of the versatility of the genre, the analysis of the reportage offers a nuanced insight in the way reporting and journalism in general has developed in the three countries. It exposes the shortcomings of the grand narrative of journalism history by

81 Cf. Graaf, R. de (2010). De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 122-124; Fontanille, “Quand le corps témoigne,” 89-92; Haller, *Die Reportage*, 19-20, 27.

82 Kött, *Das Interview*, 129.

83 Kött, *Das Interview*, 127.

84 Kött, *Das Interview*, 132; Haller, *Die Reportage*, 32; Wijffjes, “Modernization of Style,” 65, 72-73; Klaus Beekman, *De reportage als literair en avantgardistisch genre: een kritisch-empirisch onderzoek naar de classificatie van een tekstsoort* (N.p.:n.p., 1984), 32; Caterina Kostenzer, *Die literarische Reportage. Über eine hybride Form zwischen Journalismus und Literatur* (Innsbruck/Wien/Bozen: Studienverlag, 2009), 17-18; John Hartsock, *A History of American Literary Journalism. The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 51-54.

85 Kostenzer, *Die literarische Reportage*, 17-18.

86 Cf. Kostenzer, *Die literarische Reportage*, 10, 98-100; Haller, *Die Reportage*. 64-71, 90-92.

showing that the transition to an event-centered, let alone an objective journalism practice was not as smooth as has often been assumed.

## The subjectivity of the reporter

Because of the story-like nature of the reportage, the genre shows clear connections with literature. Throughout journalism history the reportage has often employed textual conventions that are generally associated with literature, rather than journalism.<sup>87</sup>

Like an information-based story, a reportage renders the personal and individual perceptions of the reporter. In favor of the evocative power and tangibility of what is depicted the reporter readily falls back on literary stylistic devices.<sup>88</sup>

The narrative capacity of the reportage and its connection with literary discourse has earned the genre both esteem but at times suspicion as well. The reportage is often connected to partisan coloring or even fabrication.<sup>89</sup> Its narrative opportunities have helped build the status of many journalists, something I discuss and illustrate more in detail in this dissertation's later case studies. Yet, the factual accuracy of such authors has often been questioned as well.<sup>90</sup> Some of these names, like Kessel, Orwell, and Nootboom, are better known for the literary work they have also written. This double allegiance points to a certain tension between literature and journalism that the reportage embodies.

Within the framework of the objectivity regime the journalistic domain has strived for authority and autonomy by pointing to its factuality, independence, impartiality and detachment.<sup>91</sup> From that perspective the journalistic representation of reality is the direct opposite of the way literature portrays the world. As a result some of the narrative techniques of the reportage, like scene-to-scene description, the use of imagery, extensive dialogue, and personal reflection, are linked to literature and therefore trigger the association with fiction. This has earned the genre a somewhat suspect reputation with regard to its veracity.<sup>92</sup> However, as I argue the dominance of the objectivity regime has been overemphasized throughout journalism history. Competing conceptions of journalism, like a more reflective journalism practice for instance, have a different perspective on the delineation of journalism vis-à-vis literature. In the countries in which such a conception was more influential, such storytelling techniques were less problematic or sometimes even highly appreciated.<sup>93</sup> Their status is thus dependent on the interplay between the development of the active reporting routines, the occupational ideals and professional framework of journalism, and the particular way the

<sup>87</sup> Frank Harbers, "Defying Journalistic Performativity. The Tension between Journalism and Literature in Arnon Grunberg's Reportage," *Interférences littéraires* 7 (2011), *Croisées de la fiction. Journalisme et littérature*, ed. Myriam Boucharenc, David Martens & Laurence van Nuys, 141-142; Phyllis Frus, *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative. The Timely and the Timelessness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1-5.

<sup>88</sup> Kostenzer, *Die literarische Reportage*, 7.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. David Eason, "On journalistic authority: The Janet Cooke Scandal," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 3, no.4 (1986): 429-433; Lehman, *Matters of Fact*, 2-7; Kostenzer, *Die literarische Reportage*, 82-93; Harbers, "Different Forms of Featureized Journalism," 16-20.

<sup>90</sup> A recent famous example is the case of Ryszard Kapucinski, who wrote famous reportages, but has been accused of fabricating (parts of) his stories, cf. Frank Harbers & Marcel Broersma, "Between Engagement and Ironic Ambiguity. Mediating Subjectivity in Narrative Journalism," *Journalism* 15, no. 5 (2014): 639-654.

<sup>91</sup> Pötcker, "Perspectives," 264-267; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 29-32.

<sup>92</sup> Although literature is not necessarily fiction, literature and fiction are often conflated, cf. Harbers, "Defying Journalistic Performativity," 141-142.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 49-55; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 103-115; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-65.



journalistic and literary domain are related, which I explore further in the following chapter.

The cultural and historical differences in the journalistic attitude towards certain narrative techniques reflect a more fundamental issue that underlies the debate and development of Western journalism practice since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the subjectivity of the reporter. With the rise of the active reporting routines it is the reporter who acts as the ultimate and inherently subjective filter through which reality is presented to the public. With the rise of the news paradigm, the experience and interpretation of the reporter became more central to the newsgathering process.<sup>94</sup> The objectivity regime can be considered as an attempt to curtail and overcome the influence of the subjectivity of the reporter on the coverage, but there has always been a tension between the - often strategically used - claim of objective journalism and the routines employed to achieve it. Both Ward and Zelizer point to the uneasy relation the objectivity regime has had with these routines, such as on-site observation and interviewing people.<sup>95</sup> When it comes to dealing with subjective elements, like conveying the impact of an event on a personal and emotional level, the objectivity regime downplays the journalist's role and generally restricts such depictions to the sources that are consulted in the account. Examining how journalism has dealt with the subjectivity of the reporter throughout its history can therefore shed light on the particularities of its development in the three countries under study. Such an inquiry helps contextualize and challenge claims of the inevitable march towards objectivity as a professional ideal.

## Research questions

Journalism historiography is too often determined by a top down approach that focuses on what opinion leaders have asserted about their journalism practice. Moreover, many historical analyses are influenced by the static normative conception of journalism as an objective practice. For that reason, I have adopted a more bottom-up approach by concentrating on the actual journalistic output as an analytic starting point to describe the way journalism has developed. The main research question answered in this thesis is therefore:

***In what way have the textual characteristics of the reportage developed against the background of those of reporting in general in British, Dutch, and French newspapers from the 1880s onwards?***

To answer this main question the following ancillary questions need to be answered:

- What was regarded as newsworthy information throughout this period?
- How was newsworthy information gathered and presented in this period?
- What status did the genre of the reportage have in journalistic discourse in this period?
- What professional standards have guided journalism practice throughout this period?
- How did a journalist deal with his or her subjectivity within journalism practice in this period?

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 564-570.

<sup>95</sup> Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 198; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 22; Barbie Zelizer, "On "having been there": "Eyewitnessing" as a Journalistic Key Word," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 24, no.5 (2007): 420.

These questions cover the main issues with which journalists have been struggling since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - with clear historic and cultural disparities in the way these questions have been answered.<sup>96</sup> This dissertation therefore ventures into a comparative and longitudinal inquiry of the varying textual characteristics of the reportage and of newspaper content in general in Britain, the Netherlands and France between 1880 and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Around 1880 the debate about journalism as an event-centered practice had come into its own in Western European journalism. Journalists started to explore the possibilities of this novel journalism practice and were in the course of developing new forms of reporting, like the reportage. This moment in journalism history therefore offers a sound starting point for the analysis as it enables me to examine the textual conventions of journalism in relation to the changing norms and practices from the moment the ideas about a more event-centered journalism practice entered the debate.

Within the framework of the broader research project a large collective database was compiled, for which 624 newspapers were coded in their entirety, adding up to 105,456 articles. It is the first time that a content analysis into newspaper journalism has been conducted on this scale in a comparative and historical framework. The data concerning the textual conventions of newspaper journalism has such a rich variety that it goes beyond the scope of my particular dissertation to cover every aspect of it.<sup>97</sup>

As I already mentioned, scrutinizing the multiform development of the reportage within the context of reporting as a new routine gains further insight into the cultural specificity of the struggle for prominence between different journalistic conceptions and its impact on the forms in which newsworthy information is presented. Next to the collective content analysis, I have therefore fleshed out the development of the reportage in additional qualitative case studies. The results of this twofold analysis have been related to the conceptions and norms of journalism that have been formulated in this period as described in previous research. This provides a fresh perspective on the dynamics between journalistic norms, practices and textual conventions and offers an addition to and readjustment of the image of the development of journalism in the three countries, while at the same time it offers an in-depth inquiry into one of the most esteemed - but under-theorized - genres in journalism: the reportage.<sup>98</sup>

## Research design: mixed methods

Researching the content of the press in three countries over more than a century means dealing with an overwhelming abundance of material, which cannot be digested adequately with the traditional approach of historical research. The scarcity of sources rather than the abundance of information lies at the base of most historical methods, in which the material is subjected to a time-consuming, in-depth analysis. By adopting such an approach only small snippets of the total amount of material can be examined.<sup>99</sup> I have therefore chosen a combined approach, which consists of four qualitative case studies and a large-scale quantitative content analysis. Both parts of the research are mutually dependent, and offer an indispensable addition to each other.<sup>100</sup> The content analysis maps the

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 13-19 ; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," ; Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 88-120; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 64, 83-92; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 31-35.

<sup>97</sup> The collective database will eventually be stored publicly and can be accessed after consultation with the research team.

<sup>98</sup> The most prestigious journalistic prizes, like the French *Prix d'Albert Londres*, the American Pulitzer Prize, the British Martha Gellhorn prize and Orwell Prize, and the Dutch 'Tile', a prize for the best examples of daily journalism, have a strong focus on this genre.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Nooit meer bladeren?," 33-34.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xii-xiii.

general developments and the variety of the textual conventions within journalistic discourse of the three countries over the entire period. Furthermore, it examines the prominence of the reportage within that discourse. This quantitative approach can thus assess to what extent new practices have actually influenced and entered newspaper journalism on an everyday basis within the three countries, thereby pointing out differences in pace and nature of the journalistic development between them. These general characteristics are fleshed out further in the case studies by providing a more detailed analysis of the textual conventions of the reportage and seeing what underlying normative conception of journalism these characteristics convey. In particular, the way journalists have dealt with their subjectivity can be analyzed in a detailed manner through these case studies. They therefore offer a necessary addition to the quantitative content analysis by showing how certain general characteristics, such as genre, topic, and the use of sources really play out within a particular cultural and historical situation.

Focusing on the textual characteristics of journalism offers an interesting insight in the way explicitly formulated norms and outlooks on journalism translate into everyday practice. Furthermore, it offers an interesting outlook on the characteristics of the way newspapers and journalists present themselves. Only a quick glance at for example the front pages of British newspaper *The Sun* with its bold, emotional headlines, large pictures and focus on human interest and celebrity news, and the much more reserved and introvert lay-out of the front page of *Le Monde* already gives a strong indication that these dailies have a different outlook on what journalism should be. This focus on the textual characteristics of journalism - of which visual elements like pictures or headline size are also an important part - extends however to much more than the use of colorful pictures and bold headlines. The examination of the textual and visual features of newspapers entails any element that makes an article look like journalism, ranging from the length of a text, the organization of the content, the choice of topic, its narrative characteristics, to its use of pictures, headlines, and lay-out.<sup>101</sup> Such elements play an important part in expressing a conception of how journalism should be practiced. They guide the readership's expectations and assessment of the dailies.<sup>102</sup> As I theorize further in the following chapter, textual conventions are a fruitful research object, because analysis of them can provide a fresh look on the way newspaper content incorporates journalistic norms and routines.<sup>103</sup> Thus, examining these conventions brings a new perspective on the way journalistic texts are shaped by the norms and routines, and it can also point to possible discrepancies between the level of the norms and routines and the text. This approach thus makes it possible to trace the development of journalistic discourse through the text.

Furthermore, although the specific newsworthy information in a newspaper differs from day-to-day, the textual conventions used to package this information are fairly steady. This makes them very well-suited to longitudinal research. In addition, such conventions do not emerge and develop in a national vacuum, but travel between cultures. They are adopted and adapted in a dynamic process of cultural exchange, which makes these conventions a fruitful object for comparative research.<sup>104</sup>

The results of the content analysis thus offer a panoramic view of journalism practice since 1880 in the three countries. However, such a broad scope necessarily means that certain nuance, detail, and in-depth narrative analysis of the textual structure is lost - specifically with regard to the reportage.

<sup>101</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xxiv-xxv; Cf. Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 3.

<sup>102</sup> Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 1-3.

<sup>103</sup> Stuart Allan, *News Culture* (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2004), 78-87; Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 3-4; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 20-23.

<sup>104</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xi.

To provide such in-depth analysis, which is necessary to explore and elucidate to what extent the textual conventions of the reportage relate to the dominant discursive norms, I have also conducted case study research. The cases, consisting of a contextualized narrative analysis of a set of reportages, will zoom in on a certain moment in time, in which interesting journalistic developments manifest themselves in the reportage.

Yet, to know where to zoom in, it is necessary to have a good overview of the general developments in the research period. The results of the content analysis point to moments in press history, which warranted a closer examination. Of course, prior research provides important clues with regards to the choice of the cases as well. Thus, the quantitative content analysis and the case studies complement and reinforce each other, offering each other respectively a necessary broader context, and a telling close-up. In the end this combined approach results in the necessary balance between an in-depth analysis and a bird's eye view.

## Four case studies

The four cases I have selected each illustrate an important phase in the development of the reportage. They all revolve around the question which narrative techniques are employed to convey an authentic experience, and how these techniques shape the truth claim that the reportages put forward. Such an analysis provides further insight into the dominant norms of journalistic discourse, and possible similarities and disparities between the three countries.

The first case examines the emerging features of the reportage during World War I. According to previous research into this period, reflective journalism was replaced with event-centered journalism. As mentioned earlier, active reporting routines were coming into their own and new genres, like the reportage, were gaining a dominant position. Moreover, particularly in Great Britain a professional framework centered around the objectivity regime is said to have come into place. Yet, the results of the case study show a less uniform picture, in which on-site reporting was not yet a common practice. The turmoil of Europe at war gave rise to a cry for eyewitness accounts, which helped the reportage gain prominence within journalistic discourse.<sup>105</sup> Its focus on the emotional impact of the war on the people involved made it an appealing genre. In this period the genre was typified by the mediating subjectivity of the reporter, which was still the overt organizing principle, and the characteristics of the objectivity regime did not play an important role yet. The First World War can therefore be considered as a catalyst for the development and diffusion of the on-site reporting routines, and as an event that incited debate about the norms and routines to ensure truthfulness and reliability.<sup>106</sup> This suggests that the new norms, routines, and forms were not yet ubiquitous, but rather that they were in the process of being debated and shaped. There was certainly no consensus yet about what the best journalism practice entailed.

In the second case, I analyze the gradual steps towards a professional journalism framework in the colonial travel reportages of the 1930s. In this period the active reporting routines were still not common, but they were gaining authority. In Great Britain however this manifested itself rather differently than in the Netherlands and France. In Great Britain the analysis of the reportage suggests that some elements of the objectivity regime were gradually making headway. Information was being disconnected from subjective experience, which seems to have coincided with the

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Marcel Broersma, "Botsende stijlen. De Eerste Wereldoorlog en de Nederlandse journalistieke cultuur," *Tijdschrift voor Mediageschiedenis* 2, no.2 (1999): 56-58; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-120; François Naud, *Profession reporter* (Biarritz: Privilèges Atlantica, 2005), 34.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 40-68; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 119-122; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 160-166.

growing division of labor in the newsrooms of the British dailies. In France and the Netherlands the increasing acceptance of the active reporting routines is indicated by the esteem of the reportage and the professional ideals captured in the notion of the *grand reporter*. In these cases the subjective experience of the reporter was still central to the account, and although impartiality was emerging as a norm, the objectivity regime as a set of professional standards and practices had not yet gained much prominence in these countries.

The analysis of the reportages about the Parisian Revolt in 1968 shows the depersonalization of the reportage across the board. The subjective presence of the reporter was effaced from the text, and storytelling elements, like personal experience and emotions were outsourced to the people involved. This third case therefore suggests that in the decades after the war the objectivity regime was embraced in all three countries and interviewing and on-site reporting were fused to this conception of journalism. It provided the professional framework that journalists were so eager to find after the after the Second World War, in which independence from politics as well as from commercial pressures became a central issue within journalistic discourse.

Finally, the fourth case deals with the deterioration of the 'high modern' professional framework centered around the objectivity regime. The proliferation of media, in which the rise of the internet has played an important part, resulted in a fierce competition between media outlets. Within that context newspaper readership dropped, with advertisement revenues subsequently following suit. In order to keep afloat newspapers needed to adopt new journalistic strategies to maintain their readership.<sup>107</sup> Under the influence of this rapid transformation of the media landscape, together with broader cultural developments around ideas of depicting reality, journalism discourse has been changing. The reportage shows a stronger focus on storytelling, in which personal experiences and emotions play an important role. In certain reportages this manifests itself in a more personalized account, in which the mediating subjectivity of the reporter has once more become the organizing principle of the story. The analysis of these different forms of narrative journalism suggests that a new postmodern perspective on journalism has emerged around the end of the millennium, which is competing with the objectivity regime.<sup>108</sup> Particularly the journalists who integrated their own experiences and emotions show their doubts about the assumptions underlying the objectivity regime and take issue with the unequivocal picture it provides of reality.

By concentrating on the defining characteristic of the reportage and relating them to the dominant journalistic norms and routines throughout the research period, these cases can offer a fresh perspective on both the development of the reportage, and give us further and more detailed insight into the way the reportage has developed against the background of the dynamic struggle between the different conceptions of journalism.

## A content analysis of 3 x 3 national dailies

The requirements of the longitudinal and the two-staged comparative approach of this project have led to the selection of dailies for the content analysis. Both from an analytic and a pragmatic perspective analyzing newspapers is an obvious choice. On a practical level it is the only medium that is steady enough to cover the entire research period. *The Times* for instance was founded in 1785, and is thus over 200 years old. Virtually no other media can boast such a long history. More importantly,

<sup>107</sup> Bob Franklin, "Newzak: Entertainment versus news and information," in *The Tabloid Culture Reader*, ed. Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2008), 13-15; Sparks, "Introduction," 3-4; Steensen, "Featurization," 49-50.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 56-57; Steensen, "Featurization," 50; Schudson, "Please Hold Still," 199.

the newspaper has been the most important medium to convey reality for the largest part of the research period. Even nowadays, in spite of the increasing competition from television, and more recently the internet, dailies are still a force to be reckoned with when it comes to covering world events.<sup>109</sup> New media, like radio broadcasting in the 1920s, television from the roughly 1960s onward, and the internet around the mid-1990s, have all had strong implications for the newspaper business. These new possibilities to reach the population with news, and also entertainment, offered strong competition for the dailies, and forced the press to reorient its focus, to specialize, or even wholly reconceptualize its role in society.<sup>110</sup> Although it goes beyond the scope of this project to do primary research into these processes of competition, cross-fertilization, and remediation, I relate changes in the press to the relevant developments of the other media, restricting my inquiry to secondary research on these matters.

Following Broersma's categorization of conceptions of journalism, three newspapers were selected for every country, of which each daily more or less fits in with respectively one of the three ideal types. This way the design enables an analysis of the similarities and differences on both the national and transnational level. The ideal-typical status of the journalistic conceptions did not make the selection of the dailies an easy task. The longitudinal nature of the research complicated it further. Newspapers are not static, but dynamic institutions, which evolve over time. A daily that fits the reflective way of practicing journalism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century might have evolved into a fact-based objective newspaper at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to that, not every newspaper has the same long history as *The Times* does. It sometimes proved to be impossible to find a suitable daily that covered the entire period. In those cases two similar newspapers were chosen to fill a slot. In the end this has led to the following choices:

Newspaper selection	Event-centered information journalism	Event-centered story journalism	Reflective journalism
<b>Liberal model</b> <b>Great Britain</b>	<i>The Times</i> (1885-2005)	<i>Daily Mirror</i> (1903-2005)	<i>Daily Mail</i> (1896-2005)
<b>Democratic corporatist model</b> <b>The Netherlands</b>	<i>Algemeen Handelsblad</i> (1885-1970) <i>NRC Handelsblad</i> (1970-2005)	<i>De Telegraaf</i> (1893-2005)	<i>De Maasbode</i> (1885-1945) <i>de Volkskrant</i> (1945-2005)
<b>Polarized pluralist model</b> <b>France</b>	<i>Le Figaro</i> (1885-2005)	<i>Le Petit Parisien</i> (1885-1944) <i>France-Soir</i> (1944-2005)	<i>La Croix</i> (1885-2005)

The titles should be seen as well-informed choices that are based on secondary literature and some pilot examination. Nevertheless, in the end some of the selected newspapers did not always match their slot perfectly. Moreover, some choices, have been problematic from the start, and remain to a certain extent disputable. First, the choice of a British newspaper that fits in with the reflective

<sup>109</sup> Marcel Broersma, "De waarheid in tijden van crisis," 25; Schudson, "Please hold still!," 197-198; Raymond Kuhn, *The Media in Contemporary France* (Bershire: Open University Press, 2011), 36.

<sup>110</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 154-157, 333-335; Marcel Broersma & Chris Peters, "Introduction. Rethinking journalism: the structural transformation of a public good," in *Rethinking journalism. Trust and participation in a transformed news landscape* (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 1-11; Williams, *Read all about it!*, 239-242; Kuhn, *Contemporary France*, 30, 52-55.

conception of journalism proved to be the most challenging. The *Daily Mail* as a reflective daily remains a rather artificial and forced alternative. Although known for its political crusading, it is generally characterized as a mid-market popular daily. Unsurprisingly, the analysis turned out that the paper is a much better fit with the story model, an issue I discuss more extensively in the fourth chapter.<sup>111</sup> Also slightly problematic is the choice to incorporate *de Volkskrant* as a Dutch example of a reflective daily. In the 1960s and 1970s this originally catholic newspaper gradually cast away this orientation, and developed into a progressive daily modeled stronger after the ideal of event-centered information journalism.<sup>112</sup> On the other hand, this exact development also makes it a very interesting choice, representative of the depillarization of Dutch society that took root during this period. *The Times* and *Le Figaro* are problematic for a similar reason. By roughly the end of the 1980s, these newspapers are often claimed to have moved away from the information model by adopting certain features of event-centered story journalism.<sup>113</sup> Conversely, it is again precisely this development that makes them highly interesting cases as well. They represent a broader historical development in which the press needed to deal with increasing commercial pressures. In the end almost every choice has some downside. In some cases pragmatic considerations also played a role in the decision process. *Le Temps* and *Le Monde* for instance also fit in well with the information model, and since the 1980s *Le Monde* might even be a better fit than *Le Figaro*. Yet, this would have meant choosing two papers instead of one, which compromises the continuity of the research. Besides that *Le Temps* and *Le Monde* are not digitized and are not as widely available in libraries as *Le Figaro*.

All in all, these choices offer an interesting cross section of the three press landscapes. The choices contain several of the most prominent British, Dutch and French dailies, which have played decisive roles in the shaping of the press landscape and the journalistic culture. In the next two chapters I delve further into the nature of the reportage, and into the dynamic relation between the textual conventions and the journalistic norms and routines.

## Outline of the dissertation

This introduction is followed by two chapters in which I discuss the theoretical and methodological framework of the dissertation. The empirical part of this thesis comprises eight chapters, which are divided in four sections of two chapters each. These sections chronologically discuss a particular time period in journalism history. They deal consecutively with the period from 1880 up until the onset of the First World War in 1914, the inter-war period between 1918 and 1939, the first decades of the postwar period between 1945 and 1975, and the final period focuses on the period after 1975 up until the outset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These sections each consist of a chapter that presents the results of the quantitative content analysis, which is followed by a qualitative case study. In the quantitative chapters the focus is on the general development of reporting in the newspapers of the three

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 84-103, 106-109, 122-126, 141-142; Kevin Williams, *Get Me a Murder a Day! A History of Mass Communication in Britain* (London/New York/Sydney/Auckland: Arnold, 1998), 55-57; Adrian Bingham, "The Voice of 'Middle England'? The Daily Mail and Public Life." Essay written in honour of the launch of the digital archive of the *Daily Mail*, <http://gale.cengage.co.uk/images/The%20Voice%20of%20Middle%20England.pdf>; Svennik Høyer, "Old and New Journalism in the London Press. The 1880s and 1890s," in *Diffusion of the News Paradigm 1880-2005*, ed. Svennik Høyer & Horst Pöttker (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2005), 69-71.

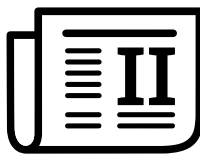
<sup>112</sup> Cf. Frank van Vree, *De metamorfose van een dagblad: een journalistieke geschiedenis van de Volkskrant* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1996), 116-118; Tamar van der Niet, *Luid toeterend voorsortierend naar links? Een kwantitatieve inhoudsanalyse van de voorpagina's van de Volkskrant tussen 1965 en 1980*, (Unpublished master thesis, University of Groningen, 2012), 72.

<sup>113</sup> Graham Stewart, *The History of The Times. Volume VII 1981-2002. The Murdoch Years* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005), 620; Claire Blandin, *Le Figaro. Deux siècles d'histoire* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2007), 280-292.

countries. All graphs and tables in these chapters are based on the results of the content analysis. The case studies focus on the development of the reportage within this period, and offer a detailed and contextualized narrative analysis of a sample of reportages mostly from one or two esteemed reporters of each country. The conclusion summarizes the main empirical results of the thesis, paying special attention to their methodological and theoretical merits in the context of this thesis and broader academic debates.







## Theoretical framework

Just like other cultural domains, such as politics, literature and the social sciences, journalism is in the business of finding appropriate ways to gather knowledge about the world and to provide a representation of reality or a perspective on it.<sup>1</sup> Journalism developed in close relation to these interconnected cultural domains, in which meaning was given to the world. Throughout history, politics has always debated over truth and knowledge as support for what was believed to be the correct perspective on society, thereby directly affecting the course of history. With social sciences, like sociology, psychology and anthropology, emerging in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in close relation to positivism, scholars have tried to find out how societies function and how people interact with each other within different societies.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the bonds between literature and reality have also been strong throughout history; novels, short stories, and poetry have been considered to provide important information and knowledge about society.<sup>3</sup> Literary movements like realism and naturalism were particularly influenced by positivist scientific methods. Stories written in this tradition - most famously those by French novelist Zola - were sometimes even presented as the literary equivalent of scientific experiment.<sup>4</sup>

At first these domains were not always that well delineated from each other, but throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century they started to diverge both discursively and institutionally.<sup>5</sup> The different modes of representation they employed competed with each other for cultural authority and autonomy. From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, journalism conceptualized its role in society and its everyday practice in a way that enabled it to make a successful claim as the most important supplier of daily truth about the world. As a result, journalism gained cultural authority and acquired autonomy vis-à-vis the other domains.<sup>6</sup>

Journalism pursues such a position by presenting and organizing itself as a privileged domain with regards to the representation of reality. Moreover, it perceives itself as playing a crucial role in the facilitation of a healthy democratic society. This self-image is communicated to the world in two basic ways: by asserting its position, role and goals explicitly in debates or statements and by conveying such an image through the everyday journalism practice and its textual output. The occupational norms journalists adhere to, the routines they employ, and the textual characteristics of their accounts are also important elements in journalism's pursuit or consolidation of an authoritative position in

1 Bourdieu, "The Political Field," 36; Broersma, "Performative discourse," 16-24; Allan, *News Culture*, 4.

2 Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 71-74; Cf. Rolf Lindner, *The Reportage of Urban Culture. Robert Park and the Chicago School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 175-196.

3 Karen Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News. New Journalism and Literary Genre in Late Nineteenth-Century American Newspapers and Fiction* (Kent/London: The Kent State University Press, 2005), xv-xix, 20-24.

4 Mary Kemperink, "Wat wil het naturalisme? Een invulling van het Nederlandse naturalistische concept op basis van poëtische teksten," in *Dit is de vreugd die langer duurt....*, ed. Frank Berndsen & J.J.A. Mooij (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1984), 45-55; Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 20-24; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 108-110.

5 Cf. Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 563-564; Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, xi-xix; Frus, *Politics and Poetics*, xvii-xviii; cf. Lindner, *Reportage of Urban Culture*, 175-196.

6 Cf. Broersma, "Journalism as performative discourse," 29-32; Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 558-570; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 32-35, 127-130; Bourdieu, "The Political Field," 40-41; For a more general discussion of the struggle for autonomy of cultural domains, see: Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993).

society. Therefore, journalism practice not only provides an image of the world, it also conveys a specific conception of journalism and its role in society.<sup>7</sup> In the existing scholarship - especially when it concerns historical research for which ethnographic research is impossible - the development of journalism has been mostly examined by analyzing the discourse on journalism. However, such statements are too often interpreted at face value without discounting the strategic goals that can play an important role in the way journalists position themselves. The struggle for authority and autonomy can affect journalists in the way they present themselves and talk about norms, routines, and textual conventions they employ. Simply put, there can be a discrepancy between the self-image journalists have put forward and the way they have performed their job.<sup>8</sup>

Dahlgren calls this the “gap between the realities of journalism and its official presentation of self.” According to him, “the metonymic character of the dominant discourses thus defines and sanctions a rather constricted notion of journalism leaving many genres in a sense at loose ends.”<sup>9</sup> It thus comes to show that in the public assertion of journalistic norms certain discursive practices are somewhat at odds with this strategic image. They are subsequently left out in the self-definition of journalism or are accepted only tacitly.<sup>10</sup> It is therefore wise to treat such statements with some degree of suspicion and contrast them to the actual journalistic output. This sheds light on the relation between the conception of journalism as it is publicly asserted and the way journalism is practiced on a daily basis.<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately, the journalistic text has been - often for the practical reasons that I have explained in the introduction - largely disregarded as a research object. A historical and cross-national examination of the textual features of journalism can therefore offer a fresh perspective on the timing and pace of the development of the competing journalism practices within the different European countries. Moreover, such an inquiry can elucidate differences in impact of these conceptions. For example, a newspaper - to stay within the framework of this research - communicates a certain ‘identity’ or recognizable profile, by which it positions itself opposite to other modes of expression, like a political speech or a novel, but to other newspapers as well.<sup>12</sup>

Genre conventions play an important part in this process of self-representation. Genre - thus conceived in its modal capacity - organizes and structures a text according to certain culturally determined conventions that the readership has become familiar with. A genre also delineates the information that is to be included in a story and how it is supposed to be presented. It thus plays an important part in the way an event or situation is represented. By employing textual conventions that are associated with journalistic genres, a journalist signals to its readership that he or she is

7 Broersma, “Journalistic Strategies,” xxv-xxvii; Broersma, “Performative Discourse,” 19-24; Peter Dahlgren, “Introduction,” in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, ed. Peter Dahlgren & Colin Sparks (London/Newbury Park/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992), 13; Kevin Barnhurst & John Nerone, “Journalism history,” in *The handbook of journalism studies*, ed. Karin Wahl-Jorgenson & Thomas Hanitsch (New York/London: Routledge, 2009), 19-21; Dominique Maingueneau, *Le discours littéraire: paratopie et scène d'énonciation* (Paris: Albert Colin, 2004), 32-33; Sara Mills, Sara (1997). *Discourse* (London/New York: Routledge, 1997), 43-46; John Richardson, *Analysing newspapers: an approach from critical discourse analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 26-27; Teun van Dijk, *News as discourse* (Hillsdale: Erlbaum Publishers, 1988), 82-83.

8 Cf. Broersma, “From Press History,” 21; Bourdieu, “The Political Field,” 44-46; Marcel Broersma, “De transformatie van het journalistieke veld: discursieve strategieën en journalistiek vormen,” *Tijdschrift voor Communicatiewetenschap* 38, no.3 (2010): 268-272; Cf. Weaver & Willnatt, “Conclusions,” 549; Frank Harbers & Marcel Broersma, “Total Newspaper Makeover. How Changes in Role Perceptions Translate into the News Coverage” (paper presentation at the Fourth European Communication Conference, Istanbul, Turkey, October 25-27, 2012).

9 Dahlgren, “Introduction,” 7.

10 Dahlgren, “Introduction,” 7-8; Broersma, “Performative Discourse,” 16.

11 For examples of similar research, journalism scholars could look at literary research into poetics. In this research tradition a distinction is made between ‘text external poetics’ i.e. expressions of authors about the characteristics of their literature and ‘text internal poetics’ i.e. the clues a novel or a poem gives about the literary conception of an author, cf. Wiljan van den Akker, *Een dichter schreit niet: aspecten van M. Nijhoffs versinterne poëtica* (Utrecht: Veen, 1985), 14-45.

12 Schudson & Anderson, “Objectivity, Professionalism,” 96-97.

dealing with a veracious representation of reality. As Broersma puts it: “genres represent an unspoken agreement between the journalist and the reader about what to expect.”<sup>13</sup> In other words, the textual conventions that make a genre recognizable communicate the particular conception of journalism of a certain journalist or paper. Genre therefore also plays an important part in the way a newspaper positions itself vis-à-vis its competition and putting emphasis on a certain genre or integrating a novel story format can help a daily stand out from the crowd. Thus, the choice of a genre plays an important role in the way a newspaper articulates, reiterates and showcases its journalistic identity on a daily basis. Examining the choice and position of genres within a newspaper can therefore provide an important insight in the conception of journalism dailies communicated throughout history and across cultures.<sup>14</sup> Such reasons merit the importance of genre as a research category.

I have defined genre as a concept that refers to a class of texts that shares certain textual features, which are shaped by a specific underlying communicative situation.<sup>15</sup> In the case of the reportage it offers a truthful restaging of the reporter’s observations and experiences of, and inquiries into the event with a strong focus on the setting and atmosphere. Many other genres would leave out direct observations and colorful elements, and solely focus on the ‘bare facts’ and give an analytic contextualization of the event or situation, thus cutting the ties between the factual information and the concrete experience it is part of.<sup>16</sup> In a reportage about a strike of the national railway company in France, for example, a journalist would seek out the event, and paint a vivid picture of the strikers involved, zooming in on their sentiments and the atmosphere during the strike. Contrarily, a news analysis would leave the level of the experience out. It would rather offer a rational argument about the event, concentrating on the motives behind the strike, the developments that led up to it, the positions of the different parties involved, and the more abstract social-economic and political consequences of the strike. Consequently, a genre acts as some sort of template, shaping the selection of the information, and the way this information is structured and presented.<sup>17</sup> As the public is - or gets - acquainted with the conventions of a genre, the recognition of a text as belonging to a particular genre also shapes their expectations of a text. Subsequently, the choice for a certain genre influences the public image and status of a newspaper.

There are many different genres, but within a certain cultural domain the choice for a specific genre is not entirely free. The available options are confined by the specific cultural mode of expression or ‘discourse’ of that domain.<sup>18</sup> In this chapter I will delve deeper into the notion of discourse, especially the relation between the textual characteristics of journalism, and the underlying discursive norms and routines. I discuss the specific nature of journalistic discourse, and elaborate on the intricate relation between the emergence of a specific journalistic discourse and the professionalization of journalism practice.

<sup>13</sup> Broersma, “Performative Discourse,” 22.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Gaye Tuchman, *Making News. A Study in the Construction of Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1978), 5; Broersma, “Journalistieke veld,” 273-274; Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 60-62; Michael Schudson, *The Power of News* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 1995), 54-59, 68-71.

<sup>15</sup> Dominique Maingueneau, “Literature and Discourse Analysis,” *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* 42, no.1 (2010): 150.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 119-120; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 42, 48-55; Zelizer, “On ‘Having Been There,’” 411, 424-425.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Broersma, “Performative Discourse,” 22; Schudson, *Power of News*, 54-56.

<sup>18</sup> Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 56; Mikhail Bakhtin, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist & Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 80-82; Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 238.

## Defining discourse

Discourse is a versatile concept, as it has been defined in many different ways. It deals with the constitutive role of language in society and plays an important role in many different research traditions, such as sociology, linguistics, gender studies, and literary studies.<sup>19</sup> It is a useful theoretical concept, but because of its pervasive and varying use in different fields of research it needs to be delineated clearly. Fundamentally, the notion of discourse directs the attention to the social process underlying the constitution and delineation of - in this case - journalistic texts. The definition by Foucault - one of the 'founding fathers' and influential theorists of the concept - emphasizes exactly this constitutive power of discourse.<sup>20</sup> Many scholars have built on his theoretical work, sometimes also criticizing parts of it. Going into these debates goes beyond the scope of this thesis. All these scholars emphasize the social nature of language and the constitutive power of discourse in shaping knowledge and society while acknowledging the reciprocity of the way discourse and society influence each other.<sup>21</sup> Within the context of my thesis the way Mary Kemperink en Leonieke Vermeer conceive discourse offers the most fruitful delineation of the notion. Based on their research, I have defined discourse as an amalgam of communicative utterances within a certain domain, through which knowledge - in the most general sense of the word - circulates. Discourse dialectically shapes and is shaped by the nature and presentation of this knowledge, while also taking into account whether someone has the authority to participate in this form of knowledge production.<sup>22</sup>

Scholars like Jean Chalaby and Dominique Maingueneau have argued that discourse is embedded in a field of discursive production, which entails the institutional organization of a domain. The term 'field' is coined by cultural sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who has convincingly shown that fields are governed by a continuous power struggle between and within fields. Actors of a certain field attempt to gain authority within a field, and as a whole, a field aims to gain authority vis-à-vis other fields, like literature or politics. Such processes are mostly unconsciously adhered to by the actors of a field. The institutional organization of a field and the characteristics of discourse are intricately related and determine each other reciprocally. Furthermore, the idea that fields, and the actors within these fields, are embroiled in a continuous power struggle can offer an interesting explanatory framework for the discursive developments in journalism. Moreover, examining journalism history from a field perspective would offer interesting insights in the dynamics behind the discursive developments.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, this goes beyond the scope of my research project, for which it is important to make a clear distinction between the discursive level and the institutional and to not assume a one-on-one relation between their development. The primary focus of this dissertation is on the discursive developments within journalism history, which I have related and compared to the relevant institutional developments based on secondary literature. I have examined the development of the textual conventions of newspaper journalism as a means to scrutinize journalistic discourse. Thus apart from putting the discursive developments within the institutional context they take place in and pointing out institutional differences between the three countries that figure in this thesis, I will

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Mills, *Discourse*, 1-25; Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 237-238.

<sup>20</sup> At different occasions, Foucault himself also has used the concept discourse in various ways, cf. Mills, *Discourse*, 6-7.

<sup>21</sup> Mills, *Discourse*, 6-7, 44-46; Dominique Maingueneau, *Genèses du discours* (Liège/Brussels: Pierre Mardaga, 1984), 1-10; Maingueneau, *Discours littéraire*, 31-35; Jürgen Link & Ursula Link-Heer, "Diskurs/Interdiskurs und Literaturanalyse," *Lili. Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* 20, no.77 (1990): 89-91.

<sup>22</sup> Mary Kemperink, Mary & Leonieke Vermeer, "Literatuur en wetenschap: een dynamische en complexe relatie. Enkele theoretische en methodologische overwegingen," *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 13 (2009): 52-53.

<sup>23</sup> Both Susanne Jansen and Marcel Broersma have made an argument for this kind of research, cf. Susanne Jansen, "De institutionele logica van de journalistiek: onderzoek naar het journalistieke veld in het spoor van Bourdieu," in *Tijdschrift voor Communicatiewetenschap* 38, no.3 (2010): 259-266; Marcel Broersma, "De transformatie van het journalistieke veld: discursieve strategieën en journalistieke vormen," in *Tijdschrift voor Communicatiewetenschap* 38, no.3 (2010): 267-275

leave the field perspective aside in this research.<sup>24</sup>

Discourse entails the production of texts - in its broad sense of communicative utterance - according to a certain set of norms, procedures and formats, which provide a certain type of knowledge. In other words, discourse provides the dos and don'ts with regard to knowledge production. Society can be seen as made up of different discourses, which are intricately connected to each other. They together shape, but in turn are also shaped by society. This also means that a single discourse indirectly influences and is influenced by other discourses, reinforcing the dynamic character of discourse. With regard to journalism this means that although journalism discourse is embedded within a particular institutional framework, its development cannot be seen apart from the development of literary, political or scientific discourse. In some periods and cases the boundaries between them can even be rather fuzzy, making it hard to determine where one discourse ends and another one starts.

This dialectical character of discourse is reinforced by the inner-dynamics of discourse. Underlying the knowledge production of a certain discourse is a, mostly unconscious, process of social negotiation over the constitution and delineation of the discursive production within a particular cultural domain. Discourse is both reiterated and adapted by every text it produces, making it subject to continuous process of renegotiation of its norms, procedures and formats. Discourse is shaped by and simultaneously shapes norms, practices and textual conventions, which are intricately related to each other. Together they embody the conception of a specific cultural mode of expression. This process points to the inherent historical variability of discourse, rejecting any static or essentialist perspective on discursive production.<sup>25</sup>

The discursive norms pertaining to journalism express the - often rather abstract - conditions that journalistic practice has to satisfy. For instance, the influential belief that a journalist needs to be an impartial and detached observer has become deeply ingrained in society in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The discursive practices can be defined as the routines with which the newsworthy information is gathered and verified, like reporting and interviewing. Finally, the discursive conventions refer to the textual characteristics of the way newsworthy information is structured and presented.<sup>26</sup> The discursive norms, practices and conventions influence each other reciprocally, but not (necessarily) in the instrumental way many journalism scholars have implicitly assumed.

From this perspective, the assertion of the objectivity norm does not automatically imply a particular set of textual conventions for instance. Nor can the emergence of on-site reporting routines and interviewing be seen as shorthand for the rise of the objectivity regime. As my case studies clearly show, these routines, for instance, have been regarded as compatible with norms of impartiality and detachment as well as engagement.<sup>27</sup> As a result, a discourse is not a neatly organized system with a uniform discursive production. It should rather be regarded as an aggregate of communicative expressions in which different sub-discourses co-exist, influence each other, and struggle for dominance.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the claims that are rhetorically put forward about the strict separation from literary discourse for instance are undoubtedly embellished, serving the strategic purpose of obtaining authority and autonomy. In reality, these discourses are not as clearly separated and occasionally texts might be tributary to more than one discourse. As I will discuss further on in

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Bourdieu, "The Political Field," 33-41; Pierre Bourdieu, "Enkele eigenschappen van velden," in *Opstellen over smaak, habitus en het veldbegrip*, ed. Pierre Bourdieu & Dick Pels (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1992), 171-178; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 32-48.

<sup>25</sup> Mills, *Discourse*, 43-44; Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 54-56; Maingueneau, *Discours littéraire*, 33.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xiii-xxiii; Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 39-41.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Ilja van den Broek, "De persoonlijke politiek van New Journalism," *Tijdschrift voor Mediageschiedenis* 6, no.1 (2003): 15-21.

<sup>28</sup> Kemperink & Vermeer, "Literatuur en wetenschap," 52.

this chapter and illustrate in the case studies, especially the genre of the reportage elucidates how the boundaries between journalism and literature are sometimes hard to distinguish.<sup>29</sup>

Consequently, using the notion of discourse opens up a multi-levelled perspective on journalism history in Europe, which offers a nuanced picture of the multiform development. A European journalism discourse can be discerned, shaped by national discourses influencing and competing with each other. In turn these national discourses are shaped by the struggle between different sub-discourses that are present. As a result of the fuzzy boundaries between different discourses, journalism can be distinguished from but is also influenced by literature and politics for instance.

## Journalism as a performative discourse

Although every discourse produces a specific form of knowledge, the different forms of knowledge are clearly not treated equally within society. For instance, the 'knowledge' provided by a novel has a totally different status than what is stated in a scientific article, and the speech of a politician is assessed differently than a journalistic news analysis. Foucault argues that:

[E]ach society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is the types of discourse it harbors and causes to function as true: the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorized for obtaining truth: the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.<sup>30</sup>

In the early modern period, journalism has developed into such a legitimized discourse. In the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, journalism made an increasingly authoritative and successful - referential - truth claim and was generally believed to provide - or at least attempt to provide - the public with an adequate representation of the world. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the foundation was laid for an independent journalistic discourse that would develop from that moment onwards.<sup>31</sup> The newspaper had grown into the most important news medium, which provided the journalistic domain with a certain amount of authority and autonomy. In this period the popular images of journalism as the fourth estate and as the mirror of reality came into their own.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, the relation between journalism and reality has always remained an ongoing topic of reflection, and journalism's claim to truth remains a precarious issue, which at times has been debated vigorously.<sup>33</sup>

Especially within postmodern society and culture the self-evidence of these images has declined and they have lost authority and persuasive power.<sup>34</sup> The rational-positivistic epistemology that

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Harbers, "Defying Journalistic Performativity," 141-142, 148-150.

<sup>30</sup> Foucault, Michel (1979). "Truth and Power: an Interview with Alessandro Fontano and Pasquale Pasquino," in *Michel Foucault: Power/Truth/Strategy*, ed. Meaghan Morris & Paul Patton (Sydney: Feral Publications, 1979), 46, quoted in Mills, *Discourse*, 16.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Marcel Broersma, "A Daily Truth. The Persuasive Power of Early Modern Newspapers," in *Commonplace Culture in Western Europe in the Early Modern Period: Legitimation of Authority*, ed. Joop Koopmans & Nils Petersen (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 21-26; Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 89-174.

<sup>32</sup> Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 32-35; Collins & Palmegiano, "Introduction," 3; Hampton, "Understanding media," 224-227; Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 23, 127, 174-181.

<sup>33</sup> Barbie Zelizer, "Journalism and the academy," in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, ed. Karin Wahl-Jorgenson & Thomas Hanitzsch (New York/London: Routledge, 2009), 29; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 15-16; Cf. Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 21-22; Allan, *News Culture*, 46-47.

<sup>34</sup> Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 12-13; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 16; Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 56-67.

is dominant within the traditional domains of knowledge production is being questioned.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, under influence of literary and philosophical postmodernism, the notion of truth has been deconstructed as having an inherently ideological basis. Consequently, the belief that journalism is naturally capable to represent reality adequately has quickly lost ground; an issue I will discuss in more detail in chapter X and XI.<sup>36</sup> Certainly, within academia it is generally accepted that journalism practice is a specific mode of representation, which - like all forms of representation - is by nature a subjective and ideologically infused construction.<sup>37</sup> Such a perspective makes it hard for the traditionally valorized domains of truth to maintain their authoritative status in that respect.

With this in mind it is interesting to see that most people involved in the journalistic domain to a certain extent still deny, ignore, or only reluctantly acknowledge the perspective of journalism as providing a social construction of reality instead of offering an undistorted image of reality.<sup>38</sup> How strong journalism and truth are tied together is exemplified by the outrage of both the public and journalists themselves when they find out that they are hoaxed.<sup>39</sup> That the severity of the norms with regard to the connection between journalism and truth is also subject to historical variation is indicated by the more lenient attitude of the public concerning truth up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>40</sup> Journalists and editors, strongly inscribed in and professionally indebted to the journalistic domain, explain such violations of truth generally by pointing to individual journalists or journalistic institutions, who failed to enforce the common journalistic standards. Thus, the journalistic norms, routines and textual conventions are still believed to ensure a truthful and trustworthy way of representing reality. From that perspective, violation of truth only means that these guidelines were not executed properly instead of signaling a problem inherent to journalism practice.<sup>41</sup>

These examples of paradigm repair can be explained by the nature of journalistic discourse and its struggle for authority, autonomy, and attractiveness. In the acquisition of this "triple A" status the notion of truth plays a pivotal role.<sup>42</sup> Providing truth about the world is the ability from which the journalistic domain derives its authority and independence as a domain. At the same time it is the promise of learning the truth about the world that ultimately attracts readers. If, for example, a news report does not manage to make a successful truth claim it is robbed from its most vital function, and loses all journalistic authority and appeal to the public. To attract readership does not only mean that journalists need to be truthful. They also have to provide information readers are curious about, which also depends on the way a story is written. However, the stories people are interested in show large differences. Appealing to one group might mean losing another, which can also affect the authority of a newspaper. Such dynamics play an important part in the way the mass press has developed since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is clearly seen in the struggle between the 'quality' and the 'popular' press.<sup>43</sup>

35 Ulrich Beck, "The Reinvention of Politics: Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization," in *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, ed. Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens & Scott Lash (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 10-11, 29-33.

36 Wolfgang Iser, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), 31-37.

37 Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 16; Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 76-77; Allan, *News Culture*, 80-82.

38 Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 263; Marcel Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations of Journalism. On Press Critique and Journalism's Claim to Truth," *The International Communication Gazette* 72, no.1 (2010): 22-24.

39 Marcel Broersma, "A refracted paradigm," 28-31; cf. Eason, "Journalistic Authority," 429-447.

40 Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 132-133; Broersma, "Daily Truth," 23-24.

41 Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 22-24; Eason, "Journalistic Authority," 429-430; cf. Monique van Hoogstraten & Eva Jinek, *Het maakbare nieuws. Antwoord op Joris Luyendijk - buitenlandcorrespondenten over hun werk* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2008).

42 Broersma, "Refracted paradigm," 41-44; Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 27.

43 Cf. Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 16; Jostein Gripsrud, "The Aesthetics and Politics of Melodrama," in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, ed. Peter Dahlgren & Colin Sparks (London/Newbury Park/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992), 84-85, 92-93; Tulloch, "Eternal Recurrence," 133-137, 142-144.



Still, journalism's fundamental right of existence boils down to its ability to render the truth, and any threat to this claim is therefore repudiated fiercely.<sup>44</sup> The idea that journalism has no specific capacity to provide the truth would shatter the basis on which the whole institutional, social, and commercial organization of the domain rests - with all its consequences. Providing a truthful representation of reality is journalism's *raison d'être*, and journalistic discourse must, therefore, time and again persuade the public to accept the claim and convince it of its capability of providing truth. From roughly the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, journalism therefore adheres to a basic (naïve) empiricist perspective on reality. Within this framework reality is considered to exist independently from the people observing it; 'the truth is out there' so to speak. From that perspective, reality can be represented unproblematically when the right empirical tools are used. This rise of empiricism is generally connected to the narrowly defined objectivity regime with its strictly delineated rules and conventions.<sup>45</sup> However, the bonds between empiricism and objectivity seem to be less exclusive than scholars assume. As I will demonstrate, the basic empiricist assumptions also underlie alternative conceptions of journalism, in which detachment for instance was not such an issue. For a large part the debates within the journalistic domain about the norms, routines, and textual conventions in this research period deal with the question what the 'right' tools to present reality are, but in the large majority of the cases journalists stay within the boundaries of the empiricist framework.

Conversely, within academia, scholars have abundantly demonstrated that journalism cannot live up to its own empiricist claims as it provides the reader with an inherently subjective, incomplete and inconclusive interpretative construction of reality.<sup>46</sup> Tuchman has demonstrated convincingly that the production of journalistic content is an institutionalized 'ritual'. With ritual she means "a routine procedure which has relatively little or only tangential relevance to the end sought."<sup>47</sup> In her research she focused on objective journalism, but this rituality can be extended to other conceptions of journalism as well, although there might be a difference in the rigidity with which the procedures in question are enforced. Nevertheless, every conception of journalism practice is based on subjective and normative choices about the elements of reality that should be covered and the way they should be conveyed in text. For this reason journalists will always present a partial depiction of reality, which embodies a particular perspective on reality.<sup>48</sup>

Based on this conclusion, the acceptance of journalism's truth claim does not only reside in the ontological status of the journalistic accounts derived from the journalistic practices to gather information, but also, even primarily, in the persuasive power of its truth claim.<sup>49</sup> For this reason, Broersma rejects the idea that journalism can be approached unproblematically as a descriptive discourse. Drawing on Austin, Searle and Bourdieu, he argues that journalism can better be conceptualized as a performative discourse, which acknowledges both journalism's dialectical nature of simultaneously describing as well as constructing reality.<sup>50</sup> I consider this a very fruitful approach, but I want to emphasize that it is mainly fruitful from a scholarly perspective and that the performative power of journalism resides for an important part in its success of asserting itself as a descriptive discourse that is self-evidently capable to mirror reality. Thus, I do not argue

<sup>44</sup> Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 16; Allan, *News Culture*, 77-78; Van Dijk, *News as Discourse*, 82-83; Tuchman, *Making News*, 83.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Muñoz-Torres, "Truth and Objectivity," 568-571; Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 95-96, 142-143; Cf. Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 77-79, 197-198; Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 191-192.

<sup>46</sup> Allan, *News Culture*, 80-81; Tuchman, *Making News*, 5-6; Verica Rupar, "Introduction," in *Journalism & Meaning-Making. Reading the Newspaper*, ed. Verica Rupar (New York: Hampton Press, 2010), 4-9.

<sup>47</sup> Tuchman, "Strategic Ritual," 661.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 4-12, 209-215; Tuchman, "Strategic Ritual," 661; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 22-24.

<sup>49</sup> Allan, *News Culture*, 80-81; Van Dijk, *News as Discourse*, 83-84; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 16-19.

<sup>50</sup> Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 16-19.

that journalism should reconceptualize itself as a performative discourse, but that, as a scholarly perspective, it elucidates the social process underlying its particular truth claim. It shifts the attention from the question whether an article is 'true' to the question how the truth claim of an article is shaped and formulated. From the latter perspective, the discussions about what the 'right' depiction of reality is, which is a problematic issue considered within a postmodern framework, becomes less interesting than the question in what ways the competing truth claims differ from each other.

In short, emphasizing the performative nature of journalism is based on the idea that language, and subsequently journalism, never passively mirrors the world, but has an active part in shaping reality.<sup>51</sup> In a journalistic text the complex reality is represented in a way that is shaped by its discourse. As a result of an active process of selection of suitable information, the use of socially shared frames and familiar textual conventions, an event becomes truthful and meaningful to the public.<sup>52</sup> This textual representation can move between restaging and recounting an event, roughly corresponding to respectively showing and telling what happened. Restaging, which means conveying the experience of an event, is a key characteristic of the reportage. As I will discuss more elaborately further on in this chapter, it is especially this restaging that has given the genre an ambivalent status with regard to journalism's truth claim throughout the development of journalism in 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe.

To assert a felicitous truth claim the constructional character of journalism has to be naturalized. The set of norms, routines, and textual conventions helps to naturalize journalistic discourse and, consequently, preserves the naïve empiricist illusion of journalism.<sup>53</sup> Thus, although journalism actively shapes and constructs an image of reality instead of simply mirroring reality, it does convince the public of the latter. Journalism persuades the public to accept the legitimacy of their truth claim, and thereby transforms an interpretation into social reality. This performative mechanism is rooted in ideas about the social nature of language and echoes by analogy Austin's speech act theory of 'performative utterances', like 'I declare this meeting open'. However, the notion of performativity within the context of journalism conceives it in a much broader sense. It shows how through the use of certain norms, routines and textual conventions, journalistic texts simultaneously passively represent as well as produce reality.<sup>54</sup>

Although journalists often stress the importance of accurate and therefore verifiable information, according to Broersma, the persuasive power of journalism does not reside primarily in its ontological accuracy. Most of the time, the public is in no position to judge whether an article presents reality accurately. With regard to the accuracy of an account, the judgment of the readership is generally based on their critical assessment whether the information matches their internalized cultural frames and whether it matches other accounts of the event.<sup>55</sup> As Eason puts it in his article on the Janet Cooke affaire, in which Cooke won a Pulitzer Prize for a fabricated story:

Against the habits of news reading that transform conventions into facts, "Jimmy's World" asserted that facts are produced by consensus and that the consensus may be grounded in little more than the fit between style and expectation.<sup>56</sup>

51 Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 10-14; Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 4-5; Allan, *News Culture*, 80-82; Tuchman, *Making News*, 182-184.

52 Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 17; Allan, *News Culture*, 81; Richardson, *Analysing Newspaper*, 76-77; Van Dijk, *News as Discourse*, 83-88.

53 Cf. Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 5-6.

54 Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 17-18; Allan, *News Culture*, 80-82; Cf. Van Dijk, *News as Discourse*, 83-84.

55 Allan, *News Culture*, 80-82; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 20; Van Dijk, *News as Discourse*, 84.

56 Eason, "Journalistic authority," 432-433.

He suggests that the recognition of the textual conventions, or in other words the familiar 'look' of the article, is in itself enough to constitute the reader's trust. This idea forms a central part of Broersma's argument about journalism's performativity. Next to the status of the specific outlet and the specific journalist, the textual conventions are one of the most important discursive strategies with regard to the felicity of the journalistic truth claim. The belief in the journalistic capacity to represent reality adequately, resides in the acceptance of certain journalistic norms and corresponding routines. The specific features of journalistic texts are believed to embody these norms and routines. For example, the integration of quotes from different sources in a journalistic text embodies the interviewing practice and the norm of impartiality by presenting the different sides to a story. Next to describing reality, the textual traits thus also play an important part in persuading the reader that an account conveys the truth.<sup>57</sup>

**Form and style embody the social code connecting journalists and their public. These categories make it possible to naturalize and legitimize the visions and interpretations of the social world journalism provides.<sup>58</sup>**

Thus, the specific textual characteristics reinforce the silent contract between journalist and audience, which make these features a highly interesting research object.

Although journalism has always claimed to present the truth, what constitutes truth has been subject to historical change.<sup>59</sup> Subsequently, the journalistic norms, practices and textual conventions that are accepted as adequate ways of obtaining the truth are subject to change as well. Analyzing the textual conventions of journalism from a historical perspective makes it possible to map the range of changing textual characteristics within the different journalistic discourses. Subsequently, such an analysis allows me to tap into the evolving characteristics of the way a truth claim has been shaped textually within journalistic discourse.

The development of journalism - particularly since roughly the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - should be regarded as a reflection of the cultural specific struggle between competing journalistic conceptions. What in my opinion is ultimately at stake in the discussion about journalism's truth claim is the issue of the inherent subjectivity of the journalist, which links up to the time-honored debate about the relation between subject and object. In his research into narrative literary journalism, the antithesis of objective journalism according to John Hartsock, he makes the following claim: "[t]he rise of a factual or objective journalism style provoked and epistemological crisis for subjectivity[.]"<sup>60</sup> His emphasis on role of subjectivity in the development of journalism is insightful. In my thesis, I will both nuance and illustrate this claim, as subjectivity is indeed a key issue, but it has not always been doubted as strongly as Hartsock suggests. Particularly in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century subjectivity was not regarded to be detrimental to a truthful and trustworthy representation of reality within European journalism. Only, after the Second World War, when factuality and objectivity are more or less conceived as synonyms, Hartsock's claim holds true.

As I have mentioned in the introduction, analyzing the textual characteristics of the reportage and its role within journalistic discourse can elucidate the ways journalists have dealt with subjectivity in the three countries over the long 20<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, the capacity of the reportage to adapt itself to both norms of objectivity and a more personalized conception of journalism makes it the perfect site

<sup>57</sup> Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 27-29; Schudson, *Power of News*, 54, 61-65; Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 2-3, 5-12.

<sup>58</sup> Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 27.

<sup>59</sup> Michel Foucault, *De orde van het spreken* (Meppel/Amsterdam: Boom, 1988), 41-42.

<sup>60</sup> Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 51.

to analyze the different ways in which journalism has handled this throughout journalism history. The fact that depending on time and place, the reportage has been praised as a genre that can offer a penetrating and lifelike insight in the actual experience of an event, but has also been accused of being deeply subjective and therefore providing a rather fictional than factual representation of reality illustrates its versatile nature. In short, this genre encapsulates the struggle between the different perspectives on the relation between journalism and reality. By conceptualizing journalism as a performative discourse these different competing perspectives and the accompanying norms, routines and forms can be analyzed in relation to their particular truth claim.

## Competing discursive strategies

As I have already argued in the introduction, the development of journalism in Europe is more pluriform than the grand narrative of journalism history suggests. This becomes already apparent by the fact that objectivity as a journalistic norm is not as uniform as might be expected. In referring to objectivity, journalists stress different aspects of their practice. Furthermore, within journalism studies, the notion has also been conceptualized in (slightly) different ways. Yet, the most important argument against objectivity's dominance remains the existence of the other competing conceptions of journalism that have also played an important part in journalism's historical development throughout the long 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Objectivity has a long history, and roots in a long philosophical tradition in which people from different domains, like philosophy, science, law, have grappled with the problem of overcoming the problematic relation between ontological reality and the way people perceive it. As a philosophical ideal, taking the empiricist framework a step further, it is based on the fundamental assumption that facts can be separated from values.<sup>61</sup> Following science with its societal authority in matters of truth, journalists were also eager to find a sound epistemological way of gaining knowledge of the world. Objectivity offered an appealing promise to overcome the flaws of human perception, stripping away every colored element of a news event and giving an 'a-perspectival' and transparent account of the 'bare facts'. In essence objective journalism aims to disconnect the newsworthy information from the level of the subjective experience.<sup>62</sup>

Within the context of journalism, the abstract notion of objectivity was translated into a more pragmatic set of occupational norms, in which the fact-value dichotomy plays a pivotal role. The objectivity regime stresses the importance of a factuality, verifiable accuracy, independence, impartiality, balance and fairness, and detachment - all referring back to the former dichotomy. Like I have discussed in the introduction of this thesis, journalistic objectivity refers to a normative set of occupational ideals that structure journalism practice and have a ritual function in the way journalism establishes its credibility and authority.

This already shows the double role a conception of journalism plays. On the one hand the objectivity regime has functioned as an important incentive and model with which journalism could professionalize itself as an occupation. It provided the profession with a cohesive set of occupational ideals in the form of an enforceable code of conduct, which enabled the differentiation and specialization of labor.<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, objectivity has been employed as a strategy to emphasize journalism's privileged position with regard to the representation of reality. Thereby

61 Cf. Muñoz-Torres, "Truth and Objectivity," 570-572.

62 Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 14-19; Cf. Muñoz-Torres, "Truth and Objectivity," 568-573; Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 1-10.

63 Cf. Schudson, "Objectivity Norm," 151-153, 161-164; Tuchman, *Making News*, 3-5; Cf. Frank van Vree, "Beroep: Journalist," 159-161.

claiming cultural authority and autonomy vis-à-vis other domains, like politics and literature.<sup>64</sup>

Tuchman's seminal work on objectivity and other studies building on her work have shown how these ideals of a value-free representation of reality have been translated in a practice, in which on-site reporting, interviewing sources to gather information, and the verification of that information play an important part. Moreover, objectivity has also infused specific textual conventions, like the use of the inverted pyramid, an impersonal writing style, source attribution and the use of direct quotes.<sup>65</sup> Ultimately, objective journalism revolves around providing the readership with the accurate facts. For this, journalists combine on-site observation and interviewing sources to create a mutually reinforcing "web of facticity".<sup>66</sup> In short, facts need support from other facts. Moreover, to ensure credibility the facts must be verified. However, in many cases a reporter gathers information by interviewing sources, who have more information than most other people due to their jobs or position in society. In such cases it is hard for the reporter to check the truthfulness of the information in question, especially when they have also interviewed someone who makes a conflicting claim about what happened. This problem is solved within the objectivity regime by "relocating facticity". The conflicting statements of the sources are presented as their particular assertions about reality, and factuality refers in such cases no longer to the underlying claim about reality, but to the fact that these sources have asserted this claim about reality.<sup>67</sup> This is also the way opinions and even emotions can be incorporated within a story without conflicting with the norms of objective journalism. By outsourcing such subjective elements to the people that are interviewed, the reporter refrains from any value judgments.<sup>68</sup>

In their research into the objectivity norm, several scholars have emphasized the strategic side of the objectivity ideal. They argue that the objectivity ideal for an important part emerged to fill the need to justify and valorize journalism as a professional occupation. Furthermore, this created a self-image that could delineate the journalistic domain from other related and competing discourses, like PR - which especially was an important factor in the American context - politics or literature. It thus gave journalism an aura of professionalism, respectability and scientific robustness.<sup>69</sup> By acknowledging objectivity as a strategy to gain cultural authority and autonomy, scholars have also implicitly or explicitly pointed to the flexibility of the concept in different cultural and historical contexts as well as to discrepancies that might exist between the asserted norms and the actual practice. This is why Tuchman called it a ritual practice that "has relatively little or only tangential relevance to the end sought."<sup>70</sup>

Donsbach and Klett have illustrated the first point by showing that the specific way objectivity is conceived, is not uniform within different journalistic cultures.<sup>71</sup> Muñoz-Torres makes a related case by pointing to the many different norms scholars have discerned as belonging to journalistic objectivity. He divides these norms in two categories that focus on either the epistemological or on the ethical side of objectivity. Whereas factuality and impartiality refer to the epistemological ideal of

64 Cf. Schudson, "Objectivity Norm," 163-164; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 25-26; cf. Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 5-9.

65 Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 216-221; Harlan Stensaas, "The Rise of the News Paradigm. A Review of the Scientific Literature," in *Diffusion of the News Paradigm 1850-2000*, ed. Sverre Høyer & Horst Pöttker (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2005), 37-38; Høyer, "Rumours of Modernity," 34-36.

66 Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 86-89.

67 Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 89-92.

68 Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 95-97; Karin Wahl-Jorgenson, "The strategic ritual of emotionality: A case study of Pulitzer prize-winning articles," *Journalism* 14, no.1 (2013): 130-131.

69 Cf. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 134-144; Tuchman, "Strategic ritual," 660-662, 675-678; Schudson, "Objectivity Norm," 149-179; Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 256; Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 119-137; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xxvi-xxvii.

70 Tuchman, "Strategic ritual," 661.

71 Wolfgang Donsbach & Bettina Klett, "Subjective objectivity. How journalists in four countries define a key term of their profession," *International Communication Gazette* 51, no.1 (1993): 53-83.

an a-perspectival and value-free representation of reality, the other norms focus more on the ethical side of moral integrity to prevent unfair judgment. Muñoz-Torres argues that as the critique of the tenability of objectivity in the epistemological sense built up, which manifested itself the strongest in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the focus within the objectivity regime shifted towards the ethical side.<sup>72</sup>

In his research into television news, Peters has illustrated the second point by showing how the dominance of a detached and neutral style of reporting has hidden the inherent subjective and emotional nature of journalism. The display of emotions has come to signal unreliable journalism, thereby denying the inherent subjectivity underlying any journalism practice. Peters reconceptualizes these ideas about emotions and subjectivity within journalism practice by regarding a detached and neutral way of reporting as a specific mode of emotionality. This way, detachment and neutrality are no longer seen as the natural opposite to emotionality and subjectivity, but as a certain way of dealing with the inherent role the subject of the reporter plays in the reporting process.<sup>73</sup> Wahl-Jorgenson builds on this insight and makes a similar point for print journalism. She shows that although the representation of emotions does not fit within the normative framework of objectivity, it is in fact often positively endorsed within the journalistic domain. Her analysis of Pulitzer Prize-winning articles for instance shows that they rely strongly on different forms of emotional storytelling.<sup>74</sup> By doing so Wahl-Jorgenson recognizes the strategic ritual of objectivity instead of accepting its claims at face value. As a result, she opens up a more nuanced perspective on the relation between norms, routines and forms in journalism practice.

It is in part the conceptual fluidity of objectivity that makes it such a “slippery notion”.<sup>75</sup> Journalists and scholars alike have fought over the definition of objectivity, focusing on different elements or adding new ones.<sup>76</sup> Acknowledging the strategic power of the norms of objectivity instead of accepting these ideals at face value paves the way for a more pluralistic perspective on the nature of journalistic discourse and its development. The development of journalism can be more adequately analyzed as the continuous struggle between different discursive strategies of which the ‘outcome’ - as it is a continuous process the outcome is always a provisional construction - differs historically and culturally.<sup>77</sup> The aforementioned three ideal types, reflective journalism, event-centered information journalism and event-centered story journalism, offer a categorization that encompasses the different competing conceptions, which interaction has shaped the development of journalistic discourse from the 19<sup>th</sup> century up until the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The three ideal types relate to a general development, in which journalism moved away from an ideologically infused perspective on the world. The discursive forms developed from a journalism practice that was clearly inspired by political or literary discourse (reflective journalism) into a more event-centered coverage focusing on actively gathering factual information (event-centered

72 Cf. Muñoz-Torres, “Truth and Objectivity,” 570-572; Cf. Schudson, “Objectivity Norm,” 164; Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 215, 233-236; Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 21.

73 Cf. Chris Peters, “Emotions Aside or Emotional Side?: Crafting an ‘Experience of Involvement’ in the News,” *Journalism* 12, no.3 (2010): 303-309.

74 Wahl-Jorgenson, “Strategic ritual of emotionality,” 141-142; Similar ideas have also been mentioned, be it from a more normative perspective, by Irene Costera Meijer, “Het persoonlijke wordt publiek. De maatschappelijke betekenis van intieme journalistiek,” *Tijdschrift voor genderstudies* 3, no.3 (2000): 16-30.

75 Meenakshi Durham, “On the Relevance of Standpoint Epistemology to the Practice of Journalism: The Case for “Strong Objectivity,” *Communication Theory* 8, no.2 (1998): 118.

76 Cf. Muñoz-Torres, “Truth and Objectivity,” 568-570; Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 1-10; Cf. Durham, “Standpoint Epistemology,” 118-122; Michael Ryan, “Journalistic Ethics, Objectivity, Existential Journalism, Standpoint Epistemology, and Public Journalism,” *Journalism of Mass Media Ethics* 16, no. 1 (2001): 3-22.

77 Broersma, “Performative discourse,” 27-32; cf. Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 14-19; Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 305-313.

information and event-centered story journalism). However, they should not be seen as concepts to characterize consecutive historical periods. Exactly the interplay between the norms of these ideal types of journalism has determined journalism practice in the different European countries throughout the long 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Whereas the two conceptions of journalism as an event-centered practice share many characteristics, reflective journalism differs fundamentally from these two. Instead of a focus on factual reporting that is strictly separated from reflection or opinion, reflective journalism does not make such a stringent distinction. On the contrary, within this tradition providing nothing more than the bare facts has been regarded as uninspired mind-numbing factory work. The standard is set by well-crafted journalistic articles in which fact and values are fused together in opinionated articles and reflective accounts. Ultimately, the representation of reality is determined by the consciousness of the journalist, whose mediating subjectivity stands between the reader and the world.<sup>78</sup> This type of journalism is less interested in displaying a value-free image of the world, but rather has an educational goal with regard to its public. The readership is obviously informed about the events in the world, but this type of journalism also instructs the readership about the way they have to interpret these events. As a consequence, it provides what is considered to be the right and therefore truthful perspective on society. Journalists conceive themselves as intellectual men of letters, who are able to reflect profoundly and eloquently on the world events rather than actively gathering the newsworthy information. Journalism practice revolves around reflection and analysis, and the forms they use are close to and inspired by political and literary discourse. Their status is subsequently for an important part based on criteria residing in those domains.<sup>79</sup>

The other two journalistic conceptions show considerable overlap. Journalists adhering to these conceptions conceive themselves as professionals who are in the business of providing truth about the world and are for that reason clearly removed from politics as well as literature. They have translated their role as guardian of the public interest into their own professional norms, routines, and forms. Instead of instructing their readers, journalism is considered to represent the public by providing them with independent and unbiased factual information about the world.<sup>80</sup> The two conceptions differ from each other on the level of what information is considered newsworthy and how it should be presented to the public.

Event-centered information journalism focuses on journalism's role as watchdog of society with the public interest in mind. Journalists focus on the representation of reality in an objective way and base their news selection on their aim to provide the public with the necessary information to make a rationally infused assessment of the world events and act accordingly within a democratic society. This conception upholds the norms of the objectivity regime the most stringent: factuality, fairness, independence, impartiality and detachment are at the heart of its journalism practice.<sup>81</sup>

Instead of representing the public by emphasizing the rationality of their coverage of the world events, newspapers adhering to event-centered story journalism aim to represent the public by connecting to the lives and social environment of their readership. They attract readers by concentrating more on news events that link up to the needs and taste of a general public without looking at the value of such coverage for a healthy democracy. Their appeal resides in part in the way

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 308-312; Muhlmann, *Political History*, 16-17.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xiv-xv; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 24-25; Hampton, "Understanding media," 214-217; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 310-311; Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 562-563.

<sup>80</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvi-xviii; Pöttker, "Epilogue," 266-267; Hampton, "Understanding media," 215; cf. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 106-120.

<sup>81</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvi-xvii; Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 149-150; Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 19.

the information is presented. By focusing on the perspective of the 'common man' they link up to the everyday frame of reference of a large public. As a result, such dailies devote more attention to lifestyle, the rich and famous, leisure activities, and focus more on the experiences and emotions of the people involved.<sup>82</sup>

The distinction between these two conceptions of journalism is connected to the opposition between high culture and popular culture, which also reflects a clear difference in appreciation in favor of the former. The notion of popular culture is embedded in the coinciding rise of the lower and middle classes - 'the people' - within society, and capitalism and consumer society, which has led to a mass culture opposed to the norms and values of a small intellectual and highly influential elite. This elite operates in the center of power, and determines the dominant culture within a society. The rise of popular culture is often regarded as a threat to the cultural and social standards of this elite, and is often described in terms of superficiality and vulgarity.<sup>83</sup>

With regard to the two journalistic conceptions within the news paradigm, the event-centered story journalism is associated with popular culture, and has therefore less cultural authority or prestige than event-centered information journalism. Newspapers complying to the latter are nowadays generally regarded to be 'quality dailies'. However, what the popular dailies lack in cultural authority they make up for in readership appeal. They are generally the dailies that sell the most copies by far.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the norms, routines, and forms a daily adopts have important consequences for their position within society. Moreover, the aims for authority, autonomy, and attractiveness can interfere with each other. For example, the way the journalistic field is organized makes it impossible to maximize both the attraction of readership and cultural authority at the same time.<sup>85</sup> As a result, dailies are constantly balancing between the different aims and the way they prioritize reflects their position in society. For these reasons, there is an ongoing dynamic between popular and quality journalism. Roughly speaking, quality dailies guard the professional standards of journalism discourse, whereas popular papers show which discursive practices are the most appealing to the public. As they are ultimately sub-discourses of the same encompassing discourse, they are constantly negotiating over the professional standards vis-à-vis commercial success and - as I will illustrate in this thesis - influence each other reciprocally.

As ideal types these conceptions of journalism can be neatly separated from each other, but in reality these conceptions are not found in their 'pure' form. The actual journalism practices in the three countries in the period at hand have incorporated and fused certain characteristics belonging to more than one ideal type. Especially event-centered information journalism is too often conflated with objective reporting. Even the dailies that strategically emphasize their adherence to objective reporting, virtually always contain reflective articles in which facts and values are mixed, personal columns in which experience and emotions play a central role, or articles in which information and entertainment are fused together.<sup>86</sup> It is therefore important to take into account the entire journalistic content within dailies to see which journalistic conceptions are present and how they relate or are fused together.

<sup>82</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvi; cf. Schudson, *Discovering the news*, 91-106; Dahlgren, "Introduction," 14-15; Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2002), 82-86, 112.

<sup>83</sup> John Fiske, "Popularity and the Politics of Information," in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, ed. Peter Dahlgren & Colin Sparks (London/Newbury Park/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992), 45-47; Dahlgren, "Introduction," 4-7.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 26-29; Cf. Klaus Arnold, "Qualität in Journalismus. Ein integratives Konzept," *Publizistik* 53, no 4 (2008): 488-508; Conboy, *Popular Culture*, 13-14.

<sup>85</sup> Benson & Neveu, "Introduction," 3-5.

<sup>86</sup> Broersma, "Performative discourse," 16; Dahlgren, "Introduction," 7-9.



## The reportage: an arena for competing discursive norms

As mentioned before the reportage is a genre that developed in close relation to the rise of the new journalistic routines of on-site reporting - one of the fundamental discursive routines of event-centered journalism - but is also rooted in the reflective tradition in which the journalist acts as the 'mediating subjectivity' of reality.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, the genre can be ambivalent with regard to the way it deals with the role of the reporter in the process of (on-site) reporting.

Influential journalism scholar Zelizer has analyzed the cultural authority of eye-witnessing - on which on-site reporting relies heavily - within journalism. She argues that eye-witnessing has strongly influenced the development of journalism into its contemporary forms.<sup>88</sup> However, she also shows how eye-witnessing as a source of information about reality has always been accompanied by a certain mistrust to this practice. Eye-witnessing has been charged with being inherently subjective, biased, and incomplete. Similar arguments are used to reject reflective journalism as a trustworthy representation of reality.<sup>89</sup>

As on-site reporting is a key routine within event-centered journalism, the subjectivity of the reporter is ultimately at the basis of all the three journalistic conceptions. However, to what extent this subjectivity is also accepted and overtly conveyed - in other words textually represented - depends in part on the dominant discursive norms and routines of the different journalistic conceptions.<sup>90</sup> The textual characteristic of the journalistic texts within a newspaper can shed light on the way reporters have dealt with their own subjectivity. Thus, tracing the development of the textual features historically and cross-nationally can suggest to what extent the reporter's subjectivity is accepted or dismissed within journalistic discourse.<sup>91</sup> Especially with regard to event-centered information journalism with its strong emphasis on objectivity, the overt subjectivity of a journalist could undermine the performative power of journalism's truth claim. Underlying the event-centered conceptions of journalism is the attempt to disconnect factual information about an event from the concrete context in which this event was perceived. In other words the facts are abstracted from the reporter's experience. Through this disconnection it is believed that the shortcomings of human perception can be overcome.<sup>92</sup>

Whereas genres, like the news report or the news analysis, follow the aim to disconnect the facts from the experience of the reporter - even if it is only in their textual presentation - this experience has become a key feature of the reportage.<sup>93</sup> According to Lehman, this means at the most fundamental level that an account conveys human life and personality. In other words, a story conveys some form of human experience.<sup>94</sup> Rendering an experience instead of the bare facts means that an event is not only described from the outside, but that the account also consists of the way an event is perceived by the journalist. It is a way of representing reality in which the description of the world 'out there' converges with the internal world of the reporter.<sup>95</sup>

Although the reportage has also been shaped according to the norms of the objectivity regime, the genre's focus on a conveying a lifelike experience lends itself very well for the use of narrative techniques and stylistic devices to depict reality in such manner. It is often regarded as the journalis-

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 312; Harbers & Broersma, "Between Engagement," 639-654.

<sup>88</sup> Zelizer, "Eyewitnessing", 411.

<sup>89</sup> Zelizer, "Eyewitnessing", 411-412; Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 119-120; Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 191, 197-198.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 28; cf. Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 197-198.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 20-22.

<sup>92</sup> Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 82-83; Frus, *Politics and Poetics*, 66-67.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Stensaas, "News Paradigm," 37-39.

<sup>94</sup> Lehman, *Matters of Fact*, 14.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Kostenzer, *Literarische Reportage*, 90-91; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 67-68.

tic genre par excellence in which the long tradition of storytelling is honored. The textual strategies and narrative means that journalists have employed in this genre are known to draw close to or even match the ones that are often used in literature and fiction.<sup>96</sup> This explains why many scholars have pointed to the connection between the reportage and literary fiction.<sup>97</sup> In fact, the reportage is more often studied from the perspective of literary theory than from that of journalism studies. For that reason the literary potential of the reportage has received the most attention, and has often been the scholarly point of departure. This has led to interesting research.<sup>98</sup> However, some of the conclusions these scholars draw do not hold for the entire population of reportages, especially the reportages that are published in dailies are often overlooked or disregarded.<sup>99</sup> This is mostly the result of their focus on the reportage as a form of literary journalism, which definition is infused by the notoriously normative definitions of literature.

Literature is normatively distinguished from other narrative texts by the particular way in which literary authors employ certain textual conventions to convey a story.<sup>100</sup> Geisler for instance states that the literary reportage is subversive by nature, echoing the critical function that is often accredited to literature. He acknowledges the existence of the journalistic reportage, but only focuses on its literary counterpart. Hartsock defines narrative literary journalism as texts using certain narrative techniques, in which the inherent subjectivity of the reporter is acknowledged. According to him, literary journalists still attempt to bridge the gap between this subjective perspective and the objective world. Similar to Geisler, Hartsock acknowledges the existence of other narrative forms of journalism, like muckraking or sensational journalism, but he leaves these forms largely aside.<sup>101</sup> In both cases these scholars leave aside a set of texts that uses similar techniques, but is not granted the predicate 'literature'. In my opinion this essentialist perspective on what constitutes literature, and therefore literary journalism, obscures a nuanced image of the more general role the reportage and its storytelling techniques have played within journalism. In my case, I am exactly interested in the general development of the reportage, which is why I will refrain from such distinctions between 'narrative journalism' and 'narrative literary journalism.' Nevertheless, these studies are useful in elucidating certain important narrative characteristics of the genre.

The fact that the genre of the reportage is so often related to literary fiction is already an indication that this genre sometimes has a hard time making a successful truth claim. It seems that its use of textual conventions that are so commonly associated with fictional literature rubs off on their credibility. To what extent this suspicion against the veracity of the genre manifests itself is related to the historically and culturally variable development of the journalistic discourse. It seems that the truth claim of the genre is the most problematic within a journalistic culture in which the event-centered journalism practice dominates. In most cases in which the truth claim of the reportage is challenged, the problem resides in the overt role of the reporter as active intermediate between reality and the public. This overt subjectivity offers a threat to the performative claim of event-

96 Although there is no specific norm stating that literature has to be fictional, the use of the term literature often entails fictionality, cf. Harbers, "Defying Journalistic Performativity," 141-142.

97 Cf. Haller, *Die Reportage*, 18-26; Carey, *Faber Book of Reportage*, xxxv-xxxvii; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 7.

98 Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*; Lehman, *Matters of Fact*; Frus, *Politics and Poetics*; Norman Sims, ed., *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

99 This seems to hold *a fortiori* for newspapers belonging to the story model, cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 134-143.

100 Cf. Ann Rigney, "De veelzijdigheid van literatuur," in *Het leven van teksten*, ed. Kiene Brillenburg Wurth & Ann Rigney (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 46-65; Gillis Dorleijn & Kees van Rees, "Het Nederlandse literaire veld 1800-2000," in *De productie van literatuur. Het literaire veld in Nederland 1800-2000*, ed. Gillis Dorleijn & Kees van Rees (Nijmegen: VanTilt, 2006), 20-25.

101 Cf. Michael Geisler, *Die literarische Reportage in Deutschland: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen eines operativen Genres* (Königstein: Scriptor, 1982), 122-134; cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 138-143.

centered journalism to offer an objective reflection of reality. The subjective stance seems less of an issue for the reflective journalistic conception as the mediating role of the reporter is accepted. Thus, zooming in on the subjectivity of the reporter within the journalistic text elucidates the nature and outcome - how temporary this outcome might be in a dynamic discourse - of the struggle between the competing journalistic conceptions.

Based on the research of several scholars, who have scrutinized the (literary aspects of the) reportage, this genre can be regarded as operating on the crossroads of an abstract objectified way of representing reality and a concrete experiential way of depicting the world.<sup>102</sup> As Kostenzer puts it:

The reporter needs to have been on site and needs to have experienced or at least observed the event himself to be able to depict it adequately. This should on the one hand happen through the form of a *news report*, while on the other hand the *atmosphere* should also be incorporated. Already such a short definition entails the main issue of the reportage, i.e. the particularly ambiguous demand on the reporter, transporting sober information and data through an emotional appealing depiction of the atmosphere.<sup>103</sup>

The research into literary journalism has focused on two main issues: its literary value and its truth status. The research into both issues expresses the ambition to put literary journalism on the map as an important cultural form. In the first tradition scholars have focused on a small group of authors, whose works are analyzed and canonized. Their criticism on the literary canon is somewhat paradoxical as what they seem to pursue is just an extension of the canon instead of a rejection of the principle of a literary canon. In his research into the New Journalism, Pauly rightly argues that by elevating these texts to the level of literature they are reduced to their aesthetic qualities. This critique extends to research into narrative journalism in general. The narrative mechanisms of the way reality is represented in such works have been analyzed, but the attention for their role in the social negotiation process about the best way to represent reality is lost.<sup>104</sup>

In the other related scholarly tradition the truth status of literary journalism is theorized and analyzed. Several literary journalism scholars have attempted to prove that literary journalism has the potential of being as truthful as any other form of journalism. Two main arguments can be discerned. The first entails the unmasking of the strategic ritual of objective journalism. Scholars, like Hartsock have pointed to the inherently subjective and value-laden practice underlying every journalism practice. From this perspective objective journalism and literary journalism have the same inherently subjective and selective basis, and literary journalism is argued to be just as reliable as objective journalism. Or, as Hartsock implicitly argues, it might even be more reliable, because of its transparency with regard to the way reality is represented, reminding the reader that what they read is an inherently subjective and partial representation of the world.

The second line of argumentation aims to reveal and establish normative standards - mainly focused on the journalistic routines underlying a text - on which the truthfulness of literary journalism is based. These criteria revolve around the cardinal rule 'do not make things up'. However, whereas Tuchman identified the strategic role of such a set of institutionalized occupational procedures, scholars like Mark Kramer and Norman Sims present their results almost as an apology of literary journalism practice. By staying close to the authors' own statements about the routines that need to

<sup>102</sup> Ward, *Journalism ethics*, 197-198; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 134-151; Kostenzer, *Literarische Reportage*, 82-83.

<sup>103</sup> Kostenzer, *Literarische Reportage*, 83.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. John Pauly, "The Politics of the New Journalism," in *Literary Journalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, ed. Norman Sims (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 110-114; Frus, *Politics and Poetics*, xii-xiii; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 204-245.

be followed to be able to write a truthful story, Kramer's and Sims' inquiries covertly play a role in the creation of literary journalism's own strategic ritual.<sup>105</sup>

In both research traditions the performative nature of journalistic discourse is overlooked. Pauly argues that the social process underlying journalistic truth should not be forgotten.

The New Journalism can still remind us that the truth of all writing is a matter for social negotiation. To say a report is true is to affirm that it speaks the consensus of some actual community of interpreters, who read the social conditions in which the story was produced as well as its narrative strategies. In turn, disagreements over truth signals appeals to different communities of interpretation, with their own standards of evidence, significance, and style.<sup>106</sup>

Trying to 'solve' the 'critical marginalization of literary journalism' by analyzing how a truth claim is shaped textually is therefore not enough. The results of this research should be related to the analysis of the professional standards that determine on which basis a truth claim is accepted or rejected. By connecting the textual development of the reportage to that of the discursive norms and routines, the performative perspective on journalism draws the attention to this dynamic process of social negotiation over the way a trustworthy truth claim is supposed to be shaped.

In case of the reportage, the feeling of authenticity is the result of the attempt to recreate the experience of 'being there'. It therefore incorporates subjective elements in the account that convey the experience vicariously. Because of that, the reportage needs to represent reality in a way that can "only be shaped by subjectivity", according to Hartsock.<sup>107</sup> Semiotics scholar Jacques Fontanille argues that this results in the textual representation of sensory sensations registered and processed by the personality of a specific reporter.<sup>108</sup> The reportage conveys what the reporter sees, hears, smells, and feels, inherently pointing to the subjective nature of the information. Ultimately, the genre thus always refers back to the subjective perspective of the reporter.<sup>109</sup> Still, the fact that the information in a story is gathered by the observation of a reporter, and therefore roots in an inherently subjective experience, does not mean that this is also reflected textually. The final account can be objectified by depersonalizing the story, meaning that the narrative perspective does not openly convey the presence of the reporter. Thus, not every reportage presents the subjectivity of the reporter as overtly as the source of the information. In what way the subjectivity of the reporter is treated textually depends partly on the discursive norms and routines of journalism that are dominant within the cultural and historical context in question.

The choice between these two ways does affect to what extent a story can convey the feeling of being there. As Boucharenc writes

If you are concerned with the reportage, choosing between fact and effect is the dilemma of the dual allegiance, which every author is compelled to address.<sup>110</sup>

**105** Cf. Mark Kramer, "Breakable Rules for Literary Journalists," in *Literary Journalism. A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction*, ed. Norman Sims & Mark Kramer (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 22-34; James Aucoin, "Epistemic Responsibility and Narrative Theory. The Literary Journalism of Ryszard Kapuscinski," *Journalism* 2, no.1 (2001): 7.

**106** Pauly, "New Journalism," 122.

**107** Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 53.

**108** Fontanille, "Quand le corps témoigne," 89-90, 92.

**109** Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 42-49; Kostenzer, *Literarische Reportage*, 7, 82-85; Harbers, "Defying Journalistic Performativity," 150-152.

**110** Boucharenc, "Grand reportage," 228.

Subsequently, it can be argued that the more an author invests in the evocative narrative techniques to provide the reader with a vicarious experience, the more openly subjective the account becomes. Conversely, the stronger the emphasis is on objectifying the account, the more removed the information and therefore the reader gets from the experience. According to Hartsock, this opposition signals a fundamental difference in epistemological perspective. Whereas objective journalism claims to provide an unequivocal or univocal representation of reality that leaves no room for ambiguity, literary journalism acknowledges the fundamentally partial and inconclusive nature of its representation.<sup>111</sup> Hartsock presents these different ways of representing reality as dichotomous, but in my opinion these positions should be regarded as opposite ends of a spectrum. For instance, in his work on the New Journalism Eason has shown that within the realm of literary journalism, in which the inherent subjectivity and partiality of an account is accepted, there are different ways in which this perspective is translated into the text. I will discuss this issue more extensively in the final chapter of this thesis.<sup>112</sup> In a similar attempt, Muhlmann shows that it is not that easy to escape the “unifying” or univocal way of representing reality that Hartsock sees as typical for objective journalism. She shows that the attempt to critique or contest the objectified way of representing reality has in many cases led to an alternative perspective on reality that is itself also unifying.<sup>113</sup> The reportage as a genre can move between these two poles, and take different intermediate positions within this spectrum instead of belonging to either the one model or the other. Looking at its position historically and cross-nationally sheds light on the struggle between the different journalistic conceptions.

## Five dimensions of subjectivity

Based on the scholarly literature that deals with the reportage, five aspects of the genre can be discerned that refer back to the subjectivity of the reporter. Analyzing them cross-nationally and historically can shed light on the way the norms and routines relating to this subjectivity have developed. The different aspects can each be regarded as oppositions that mark both ends of the aforementioned spectrum between subjective and objective journalism. Firstly, a reportage can range between presenting reality in an impersonal or personal manner. Secondly, it can present only the bare facts as concisely as possible or overtly present a detailed, colored and compelling story, conveying an interpretation of an event that is clearly rooted in the consciousness of the reporter. Thirdly, the information can be presented in a rationally detached or emotionally involved way. Fourthly, a reportage can present an event from a neutral perspective or give a committed take on the matter. Finally, the reporting process can be presented as a self-evident way to represent reality or it can be problematized by foregrounding and reflection on the way the reporter gathered and interpreted the information. All these issues are intricately related and often hard to separate. Still, distinguishing between them elucidates the ways in which journalism has dealt with the inherent subjectivity of the reporting process. Together, these elements provide a coherent and in-depth analytic framework to see how the truth claim of the reportage has been shaped textually throughout journalism history.

How personal a reportage is, depends on the degree to which the reporter is overtly present in the story and relates the events to him- or herself. This can manifest in the adoption of a first

<sup>111</sup> Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 41-55.

<sup>112</sup> David Eason, “New Journalism and the Image-World: Two Modes of Organizing Experience,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 1, no.1 (1984): 51-65.

<sup>113</sup> Muhlmann, *Political History*, 28-33.

person perspective and in the integration of personal information, reactions, or emotions. Lehman points out that the non-fiction status of the narrative instance always raises questions about how this person gained access to the information that is presented. Nonetheless, an account that is presented from a third person perspective is not as openly subjective as when it is presented from a first person perspective. Furthermore, with regard to the first person perspective, some reporters are only visible as the person who witnessed the events. Others also play an important role in the events that occurred. In the latter case the reporter figures in the story and thus recounts individual experiences, making it obviously a much more personal story.<sup>114</sup> Hartsock argues that the choice to openly present the reporter as narrator signals that these stories convey reality as it interacts with the consciousness of the reporter, thus showing the inconclusive nature of reality.<sup>115</sup> Conversely, Muhlmann argues that the first person perspective can also be used as a unifying technique. The observing 'I' is then portrayed as the "witness-ambassador" who observes "in all our names".<sup>116</sup> Thus, both epistemological stances can be expressed by using a first person perspective, but they differ in the way such a perspective is employed within a reportage.

Furthermore, in rendering an experience, the reportage is known for its great attention to detail with regard to the surroundings and the people that figure in it. In other words, next to the bare facts, the genre conveys the entire atmosphere of the event as well.<sup>117</sup> It will always provide some coloring, but again there is a difference in degree, which is reflected in the use of certain narrative strategies. On the one hand, the depiction can be rather straightforward, providing a detailed but decontextualized and detached summary of what happened. On the other hand, it can also be highly colorful and evocative, conveying a particular experience. In the latter case, a description attests to much more interpretation and gives more information about the attitude towards the scene the person was observing. Such accounts implicitly point to the idea that reality is the result of the interaction between a subject and an object, instead of leaving the former out of the equation. Thus, apart from offering colored interpretation such descriptions also reinforce the personal approach of the reporter.<sup>118</sup>

The issues above also relate to the degree of involvement or detachment of the reporter. Within the event-centered journalism practice, the norm is for reporters to detach their account from the subjective experience out of which it originated. The role of the reporter is filtered out as much as possible. Conversely, being involved means showing that you are part of the event or at least overtly admitting to the interaction between the events out there and the personality of the reporter who is at the basis of the account.<sup>119</sup> As the reporting process plays a pivotal role in the reportage, the specific degree of involvement does so as well. Does the reporter present him- or herself in the reportage as a person of flesh and blood? Does the reporter assume the role of the recording outsider or is he or she actually participating? Questions whether the reporter is visible in the account and which stance is adopted towards the events that are described, are therefore telling in regards to the underlying conception of journalism.<sup>120</sup>

Closely related to the question of the specific experience of involvement is the issue of commitment. Especially, with the genre of the reportage, which often entails extensive and intensive

<sup>114</sup> Lehman, *Matters of Fact*, 40-41, 50; Kostenzer, *Literarische Reportage*, 84-85, 91; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 54.

<sup>115</sup> Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 52-53.

<sup>116</sup> Muhlmann, *Political History*, 19-28.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Thomas Connery, "A Third Way to Tell the Story: American Literary Journalism at the Turn of the Century," in *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Norman Sims (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 6.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 54.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 67-68.

<sup>120</sup> Kostenzer, *Literarische Reportage*, 82-92; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 20-22.

reporting, refraining from choosing a certain side within an issue - be it only on an unconscious level - is quite difficult. The evocative characteristics often have a tendency of implicitly conveying a preference for a certain side or ethical position. This is reinforced by the often politically charged topics of reportages, such as war, social abuse or ethnical conflict, in which witnessing is hard to disconnect from sympathizing or even participating. Moreover, in the attempt to discover who or what caused an event and why it happened, a reporter sometimes almost has to 'go native' to be able to and explain the event to his readers. This inherently means a loss of the neutral and detached position of the journalist, which can have an effect on the subjectivity of a text.<sup>121</sup>

I deliberately use the term 'going native'. Originating in cultural anthropology, it points to the relation journalism - on-site reporting in particular - and (cultural) anthropology have in this matter.<sup>122</sup> Cultural anthropology deals mainly with the investigation of cultures, focusing on the meaning system of these cultures. One of the main research methods is ethnographic observation, in which a researcher spends a period of time within that culture observing the people part of it and often participating in daily life. As Geertz points out in an essay on the problematic status of cultural anthropology as a scientific discipline, anthropology deals with similar problems as journalism. For an anthropologist, the veracity of the texts also relies strongly on the way the anthropologist expresses his or her authority and credibility as an eye-witness.

The ability of anthropologists to get us to take what they say seriously has less to do with either a factual look or an air of conceptual elegance than it has with their capacity to convince us that what they say is a result of their having actually penetrated (or, if you prefer, been penetrated by) another form of life, of having, one way or another, truly "been there." And that, persuading us that this offstage miracle has occurred, is where the writing comes in.<sup>123</sup>

A specific part of the problematic truth status within cultural anthropology is the insider-outsider debate, which can also elucidate the issue of the reporter's commitment within journalism. In order to be able to fathom the culturally specific system of meaning-making within a culture, it is necessary for the anthropologist to fully immerse her- or himself in this culture, in other words to become an insider. However, achieving this means - at least to a certain degree - leaving the position of the outsider, the observer, who has a neutral perspective. Becoming an insider means committing to certain convictions and perspectives in order to really grasp the way the meaning-making process of that culture works.<sup>124</sup> Similar challenges relate to the routines of - especially on-site - reporting. Because of the direct observation that makes the reporter part of a certain situation or event and the often extensive and intensive contact with the people involved, it is almost impossible to remain neutral. This is exactly what Muhlmann means when she says that it is hard to escape from a unifying perspective on reality. Conversely, Hartsock argues the epistemological perspective of narrative forms of journalism shows the partiality of every perspective and can therefore resist - although not entirely - ideology. These issues manifest particularly clear in the reportage as the genre to a certain extent incorporates the process of reporting into the story. The textual features therefore implicitly express the position of the reporter vis-à-vis his or her story.<sup>125</sup> Thus, looking at the degree of

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 173.

<sup>122</sup> Lindner, *Reportage of Urban Culture*, 4.

<sup>123</sup> Clifford Geertz, *Works and lives: the anthropologist as author* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 4-5.

<sup>124</sup> Geertz, *Anthropologist as author*, 9-24.

<sup>125</sup> Van den Broek, "Persoonlijke politiek," 113-115; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 67-68, 84-86, 124-126, 132-133, 172-173, 177-179; Kostenzer, *Literarische Reportage*, 84-85, 91.

commitment of the reporter can shed light on the underlying journalistic conception.

Finally, a reportage can just convey its information without any reflection on the reporting process. That way a journalistic article presents its way of representing reality as self-evident. By its textual conventions it reiterates the strategic ritual of a particular conception of journalism.<sup>126</sup> However, a reportage can also foreground these underlying norms and routines thereby 'denaturalizing' its own discourse. This incorporation of such a meta-perspective is for instance typical for certain authors within the New Journalism. By acknowledging the socially determined practice underlying their own truth claim, such journalistic texts point to their inherent partiality and ideological origins. Depending on the dominant conception of journalism this can have consequences for their credibility and could affect journalism's cultural authority in general.<sup>127</sup>

Depending on how the reporter deals textually with these five aspects of the reporting process and on the dominant conception of journalism, the reportage has been positioned as a genre that borders on the realm of fiction.<sup>128</sup> Especially within the framework of the objectivity regime, the truth claim of the more overtly subjective reportages is often treated with suspicion and pejoratively considered soft news, infotainment or sensational journalism.<sup>129</sup> In such cases the textual features of the reportage do not signal the presence of the accepted professional standards. As a result, the performative power of the genre to turn a construction of the world into social reality is hampered and the text is not considered to provide an adequate representation of reality.<sup>130</sup>

Another important part of the potential objection against the truth claim of this type of coverage is that the narrative techniques and stylistic devices these reporters use, like a first person perspective, detailed scene-by-scene narration, the use of imagery, and a composition in which tension builds up, are generally associated with literature. In turn, literature - at least within the context of journalism studies - is commonsensically still conflated with fiction.<sup>131</sup> Yet, research has shown that the boundary between fictional texts and non-fictional texts is often fuzzy. There are no narrative means or stylistic tropes that inherently separate fiction from non-fiction texts, which makes the distinction based on social conventions.<sup>132</sup> Still, many scholars have tried to determine the line between fact and fiction, which has led to a research tradition in which certain reportages or forms of narrative journalism are scrutinized for their factuality and veracity.<sup>133</sup> In my opinion this debate about what is exactly fictional and what is not, is not a fruitful perspective - or in the words of Frus: "a hopeless exercise".<sup>134</sup> Although it is important to try and check the reliability of the facts of a story as good as possible, it has proven impossible - at least up until now - to come up with a set of objective textual standards to draw a clear line between referentially veracious and imagined texts; the boundaries between these texts are socially determined and therefore historically and culturally variable.

That there might not be an inherent textual distinction between referential truth and fiction does not mean that there is no difference between the predicates fictional and non-fictional

**126** David Eason, "New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 15, no.4 (1982): 144-145; Tuchman, "Strategic Ritual," 675-676; Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 17-22.

**127** Eason, "New Journalism," 145-148; Eason, "Image-World," 52-55; Harbers, "Defying Journalistic Performativity," 143-144; Harbers & Broersma, "Between engagement and Ironic Ambiguity," 639-654.

**128** Frus, *Politics and Poetics*, xvii-xvii, 5-11; Lehman, *Matters of Fact*, 4-5; cf. Eric Heyne, "Toward a Theory of Literary Nonfiction," *Modern Fiction Studies* 3, no.3 (1987): 479-490; Mas'ud Zavarzadeh, *The mythopoeic reality: The postwar American nonfiction novel* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 74-89.

**129** Steensen, "Featurization," 49-51; Carsten Reinemann et al., "Hard and soft news: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings," *Journalism* 13, no.2 (2011): 222-226.

**130** Harbers, "Defying Journalistic Performativity," 143-144.

**131** Frus, *Politics and Poetics*, x-xv, xvii-xxi.

**132** Frus, *Politics and Poetics*, 4-11; Lehman, *Matters of Fact*, 4-7.

**133** Kramer, "Breakable Rules," 22-34; Heyne, "Literary Nonfiction," 479-490; Zavarzadeh, *The mythopoeic reality*, 74-89.

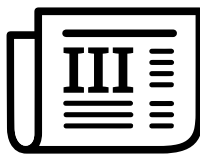
**134** Frus, P. (1994). 229; For a counter argument, cf. Lehman, D. (1997). 5.



narrative nor is the distinction in itself unimportant. As Lehman argues: “The confession that, finally, it is impossible to delineate an exact boundary between fiction and nonfiction (sic) does not mean that the boundary does not matter.”<sup>135</sup> We need such a distinction to decide which information about reality is truthful and trustworthy to be able to act in a way that is rewarding for ourselves and society. On a daily basis people distinguish rather effortlessly between fictional and non-fictional texts. This knowledge determines for an important part how people read and interpret texts. The decision is in part based on contextual and paratextual information about the medium and the author; an article in a newspaper is in general read as non-fiction and when it says ‘novel’ on the book cover people will read it as fiction. However, the textual characteristics of a text also play a role in this process. They signal to the reader with what kind of text he or she is dealing with and, subsequently, trigger a certain interpretation of the truth status of a text. Sometimes these clues can contradict each other, which can lead to confusion or anxiety about the status of the text. This is especially the case within the genre of the reportage, for it can take on different shapes and has therefore raised such an ambivalent response in different cultures throughout history. Instead of “arguing over which part an author ‘got right’ in terms of accuracy” I contend that it is more fruitful to regard journalism from a performative perspective and look at the development of the textual features against the background of the evolving professional standards, thereby acknowledging the inherent social nature of the way truth claims are shaped.

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<sup>135</sup> Lehman, *Matters of Fact*, 5.



# Methodology

## Introduction: combining quantitative and qualitative research

This dissertation focuses on the textual characteristics of newspaper journalism, assuming that such an approach can shed light on the complex and pluriform historical development of journalism practice in the three countries at hand. What has contributed considerably to the feasibility of this large-scale research project is the rapid advancement in the digitization process of historical newspapers.<sup>1</sup> In France the digital branch of *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, Gallica, offers free online access to many dailies.<sup>2</sup> In the Netherlands, the royal library has started a similar digitization project in 2008 and has disclosed many Dutch dailies.<sup>3</sup> Due to copyright issues these dailies are in most cases only digitally available up until the Second World War. In 2010, the British national library also followed suit and started a digitization project.<sup>4</sup> However, by then commercial companies such as Gale Digital Collections or UKpressonline had already bought the rights to large national newspapers like *The Times* and quite recently the *Daily Mail*, or the *Daily Mirror*. The advantage of these commercial archives is that they often cover the entire period of publication.<sup>5</sup> Before the digitization of the sources, a comparative and longitudinal research project like this would require the researcher(s) to go to different national libraries or newspaper archives to do the research on site. This meant paging through large and unwieldy newspaper files or looking endlessly at microfilms that were often of rather low quality. In the case of this research project a large part of the material - at least of the dailies published in the period before the Second World War - was digitized and was therefore easily consultable. Nonetheless, it was still necessary to do parts of the research on the spot or reproduce part of the material by making prints of the microfilm.

In part because of these practical problems few press historians have ventured into an extensive analysis of newspaper content. Another reason for this is that newspapers have often been used to illustrate an argument or by focusing on its performance with regard to a certain issue or scandal.<sup>6</sup> By scrutinizing the coverage during certain notorious cases in (press) history - like the Dreyfus affair, the Spanish Civil War, or the tragic death of Lady Diana - or by focusing on a particular journalist or editor-in-chief, they try to capture the profile of the press or a newspaper in a certain period of time. Although such inquiries offer an interesting insight in the way journalists performed their work, they have the tendency to focus on the exception rather than the rule. This is reinforced by the research

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1 Cf. Broersma, "Nooit meer bladeren?," 29-30.

2 Check the digital archive of the French national library at: <http://gallica.bnf.fr>.

3 Check the digital archive of the Dutch national library at: <http://kranten.delfer.nl>.

4 Check for instance the digital archive of UKpressonline at: [www.ukpressonline.co.uk/ukpressonline/open/index.jsp](http://www.ukpressonline.co.uk/ukpressonline/open/index.jsp) or see the partly commercial archive of the British library at: [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

5 The digital archive of *Daily Mail* can be found at: <http://gale.cengage.co.uk/daily-mail-historical-archive.aspx>;

For *The Times*, see: <http://gdc.gale.com/products/the-times-digital-archive-1785-1985>;

For the *Daily Mirror*, see: [www.ukpressonline.co.uk/ukpressonline/open/index.jsp](http://www.ukpressonline.co.uk/ukpressonline/open/index.jsp).

6 For a more elaborate discussion of this issue, cf. Stephen Vella, "Newspapers," in *Reading Primary Sources. The interpretation of texts from nineteenth- and twentieth-century history*, ed. Myriam Dobson & Benjamin Ziemann (London & New York: Routledge, 2009), 192-208.

focus on the contemporary statements of journalists about their work, in which the strategic element of such assertions is not weighed in. As a result, press histories have the tendency to situate certain changes in journalism too early in time. Research into journalism history therefore needs a method that enables the researcher to provide a representative analysis of the development of journalistic texts.<sup>7</sup> Quantitative content analysis can provide just that, but has been dismissed by many press historians as a method that is not able to deal with the complexity of journalistic developments. Although the tide is turning in this respect, the reluctance is still there.<sup>8</sup> This is illustrated nicely by a quote from press historian Mariëtte Wolf, who shows her ambivalence towards the value of a content analysis:

To get a grip on the daily its content is first of all subjected to a systematic analysis: a true torture for every newspaper enthusiast, because instead of reading it is more a matter of perfunctory scanning, identifying and measuring. Moreover, conquering *De Telegraaf* with a ruler shows a strong contrast with the intended narrative that needs to do justice to the rich history of the paper. [...] The result is an equally useful as bloodless database, which elucidates how the news themes, the journalistic genres and the origins of the articles developed between 1893 and 1993.<sup>9</sup>

After such a quote it is not entirely surprising to see that the results of the content analysis only play a modest role in her history of the daily. This is a pity, because the combination of a quantitative and qualitative approach takes the best of both worlds and can find the right balance between representativeness and in-depth insight in the complex development of journalism.

Quantitative research generally deals with large and systematically collected datasets, with clear-cut research questions and hypotheses, which are delineated *a priori*. Reducing the richness of the data to clearly delineated discrete categories, makes it possible to uncover historical patterns in large datasets. Furthermore, the rough data is scrutinized with standardized methods of statistical analysis. Such an approach ensures the representativeness of the data as a reflection of a larger population and it makes the research replicable. In comparison, qualitative research by and large examines relatively small datasets, formulates research questions and hypotheses that are not as strictly and explicitly delineated. It aims to analyze phenomena in their full complexity by using interpretative methods. Therefore, the results cannot be inferred to a larger population. Moreover, exact replication of the results is problematic due to the hermeneutic nature of the research. However, the rich descriptive qualities, and the in-depth analyses provide insights that quantitative research is never able to offer.<sup>10</sup> These distinctions are the result of their differing aims. Qualitative research tries to understand a phenomenon in its singular coherence, whereas quantitative research is searching for general characteristics and tries to objectively determine the underlying principles of a phenomenon.

For that reason this research project has adopted a mixed methods approach to be able to deal with the methodological issues that I have discussed above. A quantitative approach can handle the

<sup>7</sup> Broersma, "Nooit meer bladeren?," 35-37.

<sup>8</sup> Broersma, "Nooit meer bladeren?," 36-38.

<sup>9</sup> Mariëtte Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2009), 17.

<sup>10</sup> William Neuman, *Social Research Methods. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Boston/London: Allyn and Bacon, 1994), 120-144; Kimberley Neuendorf, *The Content Analysis Guidebook* (Thousand Oaks/London/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2002), 10-15; Uwe Flick, "Wissenschaftstheorie und das Verhältnis von qualitativer und quantitativer Forschung," in *Qualitative Medienforschung. Ein Handbuch*, ed. Lothar Mikos & Claudia Wegener (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2005), 20-28; Robert Yin, *Case Study Research. Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks/London/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003) Oaks/London/New Delhi. 1-11.

abundance of data of a serial source like daily newspapers and offers a representative image of the developments. In turn, the complexity of the development of the reportage within the broader context of reporting can be satisfied with an in-depth qualitative method of analysis. For these reasons, I have conducted an extensive quantitative content analysis that is conducted comparatively and longitudinally. This quantitative foundation of the thesis both complements and is complemented by four qualitative case studies. These case studies entail a thorough narrative analysis of a set of reportages from each country. Although the popularity of such a mixed method approach seems to be increasing, it is - certainly within the humanities - still quite uncommon, which is why I will give an extensive methodological justification of my approach.<sup>11</sup>

## Defining content analysis

The comparative and longitudinal design makes this research obviously very extensive, which is reinforced by the serial character of newspapers. For these reasons a quantitative content analysis is a highly suitable research method. It would be impossible to get a grip on such a large amount of material without a systematic way of selecting representative samples by which the amount of material can be reduced to a manageable level without jeopardizing the reliability of the conclusions. Before I delve deeper into the characteristics of content analysis research, it is however important to make clear what I mean by it. Too often content analysis has been used as a container term for any type of examination of content, ranging from the analysis and interpretation of a novel to the examination of the amount of adjectives in a newspaper. Although there is no fundamental argument that dismisses either of the examples above as being content analysis, such a broad use does deprive the term of a clear delineation. As a result the term loses an important part of its heuristic value.

Neuendorf argues that the term content analysis should be reserved for quantitative research, which aims to summarize a delineated message set numerically. According to her, a content analysis must meet the standards of (social) scientific rigor. It therefore needs an *a priori* design and a reliable and valid way of gathering data. Only by such a systematic approach will the results be generalizable and is the study replicable. Qualitative content analysis - a contradiction in terms according to Neuendorf - refers in her opinion to research like narrative or rhetorical analysis, which cannot meet the scientific standards she sets to call it content analysis. This does not mean Neuendorf denies the merit of such forms of qualitative research, on the contrary, but in her attempt to preserve the heuristic value of the term she argues that such qualitative methods should not be categorized as content analysis.<sup>12</sup> Although I do not deny that her distinction might have some fuzzy boundaries, I sympathize with her effort to delineate the term more stringently. The merit of content analysis resides in my opinion in the systematic nature of the method. It refers to a well delineated way of analyzing a systematically chosen corpus that ideally would reach the same outcome every time the research is replicated. The systematic nature ensures its representativeness, validity and replicability, making it a research method that is specifically very suitable to deal with large amounts of research material.

11 Flick, "Wissenschaftstheorie," 20-28.

12 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 5-15; For a similar argument, cf. Daniel Riffe, Stephen Lacy & Frederick Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages. Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research* (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 23-38.

## Sampling

Analyzing every published copy of nine newspapers for a period that covers more than a century would take a lifetime or longer. It was therefore necessary to use samples that could convey a representative image of the journalistic development over such a period of time. The larger a sample, the greater the chance that it gives a reliable reflection of the population it belongs to. However, a larger sample also means an increased workload. When dealing with such large amounts of material like in this research, sampling should be seen as a balancing act that looks for the best compromise between workload and representativeness.<sup>13</sup>

Generally speaking, random sampling is the best way to select a sample without any bias. However, in this case important knowledge is available about the distribution of the population under scrutiny. Newspapers show considerable differences in size and content depending on the day of the week. For instance, the Monday edition of a daily generally contains a large supplement about sports, whereas the Saturday edition consists of several supplements about topics, like lifestyle, literature, travel or science. Furthermore, there are also monthly differences. For instance, newspapers in the summer holiday period, mostly affecting the months July and August, are substantially smaller, and cover different news items than during the rest of the year - for this reason this period has been dubbed the 'silly season'. A randomly selected newspaper sample risks over- or underrepresentation of, for example, the large Saturday issues. A random sample that can discount the threats of rendering a distorted image of the population would have to be too large to be feasible within the scope of this research. For these reasons the use of a stratified sample - a non-random method of compiling a sample - is merited, which can be seen as a way to help create a representative sample that accounts for these periodical differences.<sup>14</sup>

Using a so-called 'constructed week'-sample can discount both the daily and monthly differences. The principle behind a constructed week is that the different months and weekdays are equally represented within the sample; a Monday from a certain month, a Tuesday from another month and so on. Riffe, Aust and Lacy have convincingly proven that a sample of two constructed weeks is the most efficient way to gain a representative picture of the characteristics of the newspaper content in a certain year.<sup>15</sup> Although the reliability of this sampling method has not been tested with as many variables, selecting two constructed weeks to represent a year is the best choice with regard to the scope of this content analysis.<sup>16</sup> The samples that have been used consist of the first Saturday of January, the first Monday of February, the first Friday of March, the first Tuesday of April, and so on. This way every weekday - Sundays are left out as most dailies are not published on this day<sup>17</sup> - and each month are equally represented in a sample.

Although this sampling method already reduces the workload considerably, the amount of material still makes it impossible to account for every year of the period at hand. Due to time and money constraints, we have chosen to analyze two constructed weeks of newspaper material for every daily in each country with each time twenty years in between samples. Taking the Second World War as a historical caesura, dividing the research period in a prewar and postwar period,

<sup>13</sup> Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 95; Daniel Riffe, Charles Aust, & Stephen Lacy, "The Effectiveness of Random, Consecutive Day and Constructed Week Sampling in Newspaper Content Analysis," *Journalism Quarterly* 70, no.1 (1993), 133.

<sup>14</sup> Riffe, Aust, & Lacy, "Constructed Week Sampling," 133-134.

<sup>15</sup> Riffe, Aust, & Lacy, "Constructed Week Sampling," 135, 139.

<sup>16</sup> In Riffe, Aust and Lacy, "Constructed Week Sampling," the researchers only counted the amount of local news items in every newspaper and Guido H. Stempel III's research only looked at front-page photographs, cf. Guido H. Stempel, "Sample Size for Classifying Subject Matter in Dailies," *Journalism Quarterly* 29 (1952): 333-334, cited in Riffe, Aust and Lacy, "Constructed Week Sampling," 134.

<sup>17</sup> Moreover, it can be argued that the newspapers that do come out on Sundays historically differ in character from the ones published the rest of the week, cf. Williams, *Read all about it!*, 118-119.

both periods are represented by three samples. The sample years in the respective periods are 1885, 1905 and 1925, and 1965, 1985 and 2005.

This sampling strategy has a few weak points. Firstly, although this approach permits an examination of the journalistic developments across a long period of time, the samples only account for the journalistic characteristics of one year. Strictly speaking, nothing can be said about journalistic developments in the period in between. From that perspective twenty years between two samples seems somewhat large. Certain more short-lived developments might be neglected, and the outset of certain developments cannot be pinpointed.<sup>18</sup> Still, it is altogether disputable whether the start of such developments can ever be exactly pinpointed in time. Moreover, apart from the fact that the case studies and prior research into journalism history can make-up for this, the results of this dissertation show that journalistic changes generally have a rather gradual development. It takes quite some time before changes in journalistic practice actually manifest in the daily journalistic content. With that in mind the time span of the period between the samples is justified. Of course, the nature of such large-scale and pioneering research makes it impossible to make a claim of being exhaustive, but it does offer one of the first truly longitudinal inquiries into newspaper content.

In spite of the detriments, the content analysis provides a continuous perspective on the journalistic developments in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France, showing the general but pluriform lines along which journalism practice has developed, complemented by the results of the case studies and the existing scholarship. In the end, the merits of this approach reside in its ability to map and elucidate general developments, relevant international and transnational similarities, and national idiosyncrasies over an extensive period of time. Such an overview offers an important point of departure for further research in which its results can be tested and refined by concentrating on a smaller time period for instance.

## Designing a content analysis

Riffe, Lacy and Fico stress the importance of a clear research focus when determining which variables should be analyzed: “Those who start out to look at everything in general and nothing in particular seldom find anything at all.”<sup>19</sup> In this case, the content analysis aims to examine the development of the textual characteristics of newspaper journalism throughout the long 20<sup>th</sup> century. The results can elucidate the way the struggle between different conceptions of journalism has developed. They are interpreted against the background of the cultural and institutional context, in which professionalization and the autonomy vis-à-vis other cultural domains, like politics or literature play a key role.

The next step is then determining which variables need to be analyzed to answer this question. Before I will go into this, it is important to make clear on which level of the material these variables have been analyzed. Although the material is selected on the level of the newspaper (sample unit), the recording unit is the article. This means that all the variables are analyzed for every article of the selected newspapers.<sup>20</sup> Given the special attention for the interview and the reportage, some additional variables were coded in case of these genres. Yet, with regard to the latter, it turned out that these variables, such as narrative perspective and thought representation, are too complex for a trustworthy quantitative analysis and they have therefore only been explored qualitatively in the case studies.

18 Stephen Lacy et al., “Sample Size for Newspaper Content Analysis in Multi-Year Studies,” *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 78, no.4 (2001): 837, 843.

19 Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 44.

20 For more on the different units of content, cf. Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 68-73.

As the nature of the journalistic content and its textual characteristics are conceived as a dynamic expression of the underlying production context - i.e. the journalistic norms and routines - the variables are for an important part based on previous research into the historical development of such norms and routines. Furthermore, I have drawn upon the few examples of previous content analysis research into the textual features of journalism. However, the scope of the relevant previous research was generally much smaller.<sup>21</sup> The few inquiries into the textual features of journalism clearly point to the traditional scholarly focus on institutional aspects of journalism history and show the pioneering character of this research. Based on a critical examination of the existing scholarship and by exploring the relevant newspaper material in several smaller pilot studies, a set of features was determined that covers the important journalistic developments in countries and period under scrutiny. The variables that were coded for each article are: the size (in cm<sup>2</sup>), the nature of the news (national or international news), the amount and type of sources, the presence of direct quotes, the genre and topic, the type of author, and finally the size and type of images.<sup>22</sup>

By taking into account the size of the articles it is possible to discount for the considerable size differences between the different articles. Background articles for instance are generally longer than news reports, and solely focusing on the number of articles would provide a distorted picture of the content of a newspaper.<sup>23</sup> Still, focusing on the size of articles instead of the number is not entirely unproblematic. For instance, based on the article size the *Daily Mail* puts more emphasis on news, but on average *The Times* published almost 50 more news reports in every daily. Does *The Times* have a stronger focus on news in this case, or rather the *Mail*? This question is hard to assess, because there is no clear objective criterion. It is a perfect example of how complicated the interpretation of these results can be. To complicate the interpretation even more, the examined dailies show considerable differences in size - especially between the French and British dailies. Consequently, it is sensible to look at proportions as they discount these general size differences.<sup>24</sup> In turn, however, these proportions can hide the fact that dailies devote considerably less space on the news in absolute measures. There is no simple solution for these problems. In general I have focused on the size proportion, because I believe this measure gives a more balanced image of the newspaper content. Nonetheless, wherever it was relevant, I have also included the absolute figures and the number of articles.

To ensure the reliability and internal and external validity of the nominal variables, it is vital to carefully define the categories of a variable (for example, the different genres from which a coder can choose from, like news report, interview, analysis, or reportage). The categories should be mutually exclusive, and exhaustive. If these requirements are not met, there is room left for ambivalence with regard to the categories. Especially when multiple coders are used - like in this research - it can lead to unreliable results. For that reason, the definition of every variable category (for every article it was possible to choose from a set of fixed variable categories) was carefully listed in an extensive codebook, on which all the coding decisions were based.<sup>25</sup>

21 For the most relevant examples of previous content analyses and research into journalistic form, cf. Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*; Philip Gaunt, *Choosing the News: the Profit Factor in News Selection* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*; De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*; Hubé, *Décrocher la "UNE"*.

22 Because of my specific focus on the development of the reportage, I initially had devised additional variables for this genre. It turned out however that characteristics such as narrative perspective or chronology are not very suitable for quantitative research. For that reason such aspects are only addressed in the case studies.

23 This is for instance a problematic aspect of Rutger de Graaf's dissertation *Journalistiek in beweging*, which compares the development of the Dutch daily newspapers to the development of the pamphlet.

24 With proportions I mean the percentages of the total amount.

25 For a more elaborate discussion about reliability, cf. Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 88-89, 163-172 and Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 114-119; The entire codebook can be consulted in appendix I.

However, this stringent way of categorizing is accompanied by certain difficulties. By nature, every categorization means reducing reality to a schematic framework. Some detail and nuance is lost in the course of creating unambiguous coding categories.<sup>26</sup> Although this is a general aspect of quantitative research, it becomes even more challenging in the case of a longitudinal and cross-national content analysis.<sup>27</sup> In particular coding the genre and topic of newspaper articles can be tough. Genre labels are often defined rather broadly without a clear delineation of the concept. As a result, their boundaries are fuzzy.<sup>28</sup> Take for example the genre 'news analysis', of which most people will have a fairly good idea which articles are meant by this. Yet, which set of textual features exactly distinguishes this type of article from, for example, an essay is generally not unequivocally defined. This also applies to the distinction of topic labels. For instance, the difference between 'politics' and 'social-economic' issues seems clear at first sight, but in the process of coding actual newspaper articles it ends up being much harder to make a clear decision. Newspaper articles can be quite extensive and often address several 'side' issues next to the main article topic, which makes the decision more complicated. More importantly, politics and social-economic issues are generally closely connected, which makes the distinction seldom clear-cut.

Furthermore, genres and topic labels are dynamic concepts that tend to travel internationally. They are therefore subject to historic change and cultural differences.<sup>29</sup> For example, the reportage in 1885 differs from the genre in 2005, and the characteristics of the reportage in France vary from its British equivalent. In order to conduct a solid content analysis the definition of a genre category, like the reportage, has to be able to encapsulate all its manifestations over time and place. This puts some strain on the delineation of the variable categories. On the one hand, they need to be clear and precise in order to ensure reliability and replicability, but on the other hand the categories have to be inclusive in order to be able to account for national and historical differences.<sup>30</sup>

Coding the genre and topic of an article thus demands quite some interpretation on the side of the coder. This is the reason why these categories are termed 'latent' content instead of 'manifest' content. Contrary to manifest content - for example checking if an article contains direct quotes or not - latent content cannot be discerned at face value. Riffe, Lacy and Fico argue that content analysis should only examine manifest content, because of issues of reliability. "How reliable can the data be if the content is analyzed at a level that implicitly involves individual interpretations?" these researchers ask themselves rhetorically.<sup>31</sup> Neuendorf points out that content analysis with latent content does exist, and takes on a more pragmatic position. Drawing on Shapiro and Markoff, she regards the opposition between manifest and latent content rather as a continuum that goes from highly manifest to highly latent content. Neuendorf acknowledges that analyzing latent content could be a threat to the reliability of a content analysis, but she implicitly suggests that this can be solved by making a greater effort in designing the research, delineating the variables and training the coders.<sup>32</sup>

Genre and topic are clearly latent variables that always involve individual interpretations. However, they are also socially constructed concepts which are deeply engrained in society. Reading newspapers, blogs, fiction, listening to the radio and watching television, people are exposed to and

26 Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 4-5, 124-125.

27 Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 37-38.

28 Dirk de Geest & Hendrik van Gorp, "Literary Genres from a Systemic-functionalist Perspective," *European Journal of English Studies* 3, no.1 (1999): 40.

29 Cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xi.

30 Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 37-38.

31 Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 36-38.

32 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 23, 132-133.



familiarized with different genres and topical content all the time. As a result, they have general, 'common sense' ideas about what a certain genre or topic entails.<sup>33</sup> The validity of the research can be strengthened by incorporating these common sense ideas in the delineation of the categories. By doing this, the way the genre and topics are defined within the framework of this research corresponds better to the way readers view genres and delineate topics in reality.<sup>34</sup> Because of the dynamic nature of genres and topics, this argument applies mainly to the most recent period of the research and could even lead to anachronistic category definitions.

## Reliability, coder training and the coding process

Apart from the challenges as a result of the specific design, the fact that the content analysis in this research has been executed by multiple coders makes clear-cut and well defined coding categories cardinal. A clear and detailed codebook as a guide in making the right coding decisions is therefore of the utmost importance. The clarity of the category definitions ensures that all coders categorize the newspaper content in a similar way and are thus referring to the same phenomena. If, for example, coder A's notion of what a news analysis entails deviates from coder B they will code different articles as a news analysis, making the results from the content analysis invalid and unreliable. In that case, the data captured under a single category refers to articles with diverging characteristics. On the surface the results look fine, but the underlying data does not correspond to the categorization. Moreover, when both coder A and B make the same decision it is vital that their decision is based on the right characteristics. If that is not the case, their results look reliable and sound, but if their understanding of the coding categories deviates from the intended definition the data actually does not reflect the research design and does not measure what it is supposed to. Thus, without univocal coding categories the results of a content analysis cannot be trusted and are rendered void.<sup>35</sup>

Guaranteeing trustworthy results is a vital part of content analysis. It has two important sides to it: reproducibility and accuracy, or in more common methodological terms, reliability and internal validity. Reliability refers to the degree to which a content analysis can be replicated by other researchers, whereas internal validity entails the degree to which a coder makes the correct decision - on an ontological level - based on the instructions. It is very difficult to test the latter, because an objective standard to compare the coding decisions is often lacking. Categorizing content is an inherently subjective process. Text labels, like genres, are social constructions and therefore lack an objective standard.<sup>36</sup> Generally, calculating intercoder reliability, which shows to which degree the coders make the same coding decisions, is the best approximation of the overall reliability and accuracy of a content analysis.<sup>37</sup>

Ensuring these two quality criteria starts with the design of the content analysis. Yet, creating clear and distinct coding categories was not easy within the framework of this research project as they should allow for historical and cultural variance. This is part of the reason why there exists so little similar previous research; only few content analyses combine longitudinal and comparative design. Within the framework of the encompassing research project it was attempted to address

<sup>33</sup> De Geest & Van Gorp, "Literary Genres," 34-35; Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 31-32.

<sup>34</sup> For a more elaborate discussion of this point, cf. De Geest & Van Gorp, "Literary Genres," 33-45.

<sup>35</sup> Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 123-125; Matthew Lombard, Jennifer Snyder-Duch, Cheryl Bracken, "Content Analysis in Mass Communication. Assessment and Reporting of Intercoder Reliability," *Human Communication Research* 28, no.4 (2002): 588.

<sup>36</sup> De Geest & Van Gorp, "Literary Genres," 34-35.

<sup>37</sup> Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis. An Introduction to Its Methodology* (Newbury Park/London/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2004), 21-25, 211-216.

and overcome these methodological issues concerning the content analysis. Its design was a mutual effort of the three lead researchers, two of which (myself included) also did a large part of the final coding. The specific design is an attempt to overcome the competing demands with regard to the definitions of the categories by distinguishing them from each other as clear as possible without making them overly static given the historical and comparative framework of this research. Especially with regard to a variable as dynamic as genre the delineation of the specific genre categories proved challenging. To make sure the definitions would be sound, the outlines of such genres in journalism handbooks from different periods in history were taken into account.

Moreover, as the definition of the variable categories was determined *a priori*, a pilot study was conducted to see whether the categories were able to capture the relevant aspects of the content and they were refined further when necessary. This way the conceptual outline based on theoretical considerations and prior research is supported with more inductive or grounded observations pertaining to the design.<sup>38</sup> After this process of testing and fine tuning, all the variables and corresponding coding categories were meticulously recorded and described in a codebook.<sup>39</sup>

After the codebook was finalized, several coders were hired to assist in the coding process. Before they could begin their work, we have trained the coders in order to prevent any confusion about their task and any misinterpretation of the coding categories. Especially within the framework of this research the training phase is vital, because of the latent nature of several of the content variables in the analysis. This inherently leaves room for interpretational differences between coders.<sup>40</sup> The coder training started off with a general introduction to the research project.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the codebook was discussed integrally, after which they were acquainted with the material by participating in a coding trial. In this trial run they were presented with an exemplary compilation of newspaper content in which the diverse aspects of the material were represented. After the trial their performance was discussed carefully going into the difficulties and nuances concerning certain choices and expounding the rationale behind such considerations. Although the coding categories were already finalized, the training made it possible to elucidate and exemplify the definitions, and to get the coders acquainted with the newspaper material. This meticulous elucidation of the test material also offered the opportunity to introduce the coders to the specific cultural and journalistic context of the newspapers they would be coding, which can have a positive influence on the reliability of the study.<sup>42</sup> Finally, the coders were instructed how to use the database program MS Access, make daily back-ups, keep a coding log file with notes concerning the coding process and with regard to possible interesting examples and other things that were out of the ordinary in the dailies they coded.

After the training phase the coders could start the coding of the actual research material. Apart from the lead-researchers, who did their coding over a longer period of time, the student coders coded the material during two set periods of time, in which they worked full-time on the project.<sup>43</sup> In these periods they were constantly supervised by at least one of the lead-researchers. In the first period a group of coders coded large parts of the Dutch and British newspaper material, whereas in the second period another group of coders coded large parts of the French newspaper content. This set up

38 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 133-134; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 138-141.

39 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 132-133; see appendix I.

40 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 133-134; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 138-141.

41 Too much detailed information about the research questions and expectations could lead to socially desirable coding decisions: cf. Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 133.

42 Jochen Peter & Edmund Lauf, "Reliability in Cross-National Content Analysis," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 79, no.4 (2002): 825.

43 Only a few coders were kept on to code for a longer period on a part-time basis.

was infused by both practical and theoretical issues. Peter and Lauf have pointed to certain reliability threats which are specific for cross-national content analyses. Among other things, their research concluded that both language skills and background knowledge of a certain country influenced the achieved reliability level of the coding.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, it was impossible to find coders that were proficient in all of the three languages.

For that reason, we have chosen to work with two groups of bilingual coders. That way, the codebook and subsequently the coding categories, which were defined in Dutch, did not have to be translated, and the issues of losing certain nuances and information in the process of translation were for a large part avoided. The two groups of coders were respectively fluent in both Dutch and English and Dutch and French. The two researchers (myself included) who trained the coders (for that reason they are referred to as coder-trainers<sup>45</sup>) and did a considerable part of the coding, were fluent - at least with regard to the passive reading skills - in all three languages.<sup>46</sup> The Dutch-English coders coded both Dutch and British newspapers, whereas the Dutch-French coders only coded French newspapers. This last choice was made because it was much harder to find coders who were fluent in French. Due to financial restrictions and for reasons of efficiency, it was therefore necessary to limit them to French newspapers only. Thus, the threats to reliability due to lacking language skills were sufficiently averted as the dailies of the respective countries were always coded by someone who was fluent in Dutch as well as in that particular language.

Furthermore, because of the different cultural-historical and journalistic contexts that are relevant to this research, the decision was made to let the coders work on one specific country. If possible their work was also restricted to one or two specific dailies within a specific time period.<sup>47</sup> In an ideal situation a coder would then, for example, only code *Le Petit Parisien* between 1885 and 1925 for instance. Apart from the aforementioned advantages of only having to be acquainted with one specific historical context, sticking to one daily for a specific time period is also beneficial, because of the habitual nature of newspapers. The coders could much easier recognize reoccurring columns and authors, and the fairly steady departmentalization of the newspaper.

Within the framework of cross-national content analysis, Peter and Lauf have warned for the emergence of smaller coding groups within the general group and their influence on the accuracy of the coding. For example, the coders that have only worked on the French newspapers might share certain particular interpretation of the coding categories, which could influence the coding process. This might not affect the intercoder reliability among their subgroup, but in general the reliability of the coding process would decline. To account for such influences Peter and Lauf assign an important role for the coder-trainers, whose intercoder reliability test should be compared with those of the coders in order to make sure this is not the case. Thus, they grant the coder-trainers an authoritative position based on their experience with the research design and the material, which could give an indication of the accuracy of the coding.<sup>48</sup> In our case the material was coded at different moments in time using different groups of coders, due to the large amount of material. In theory there could be a chance that the groups interpreted the coding categories differently, but this is unlikely given the fact that the two coder-trainers always participated in the coding and supervised the coding process.

<sup>44</sup> Peter & Lauf, "Cross-National Content Analysis," 824-825.

<sup>45</sup> The concept coder-trainer is coined by Peter and Lauf in their work on Cross-National Content Analysis, cf. Peter & Lauf, "Cross-National Content Analysis," 815-832.

<sup>46</sup> With fluency I mean in this case at least fluency in reading. However, most often the coders and senior researchers were fluent both passively and actively.

<sup>47</sup> This was opposite to the coder-trainers, who intentionally coded material from all the dailies of every country throughout the entire period.

<sup>48</sup> Peter & Lauf, "Cross-National Content Analysis," 826-827.

As a result, the coding process was constantly monitored, and the threats Peter and Lauf describe are unlikely to have occurred. Nevertheless, the coder-trainers were always included when the intercoder reliability was tested.

With regard to the supervision of the coding process, Neuendorf argues that after the initial pilot phase, when the variable categories are finalized, coding should always be done independently without any deliberation.<sup>49</sup> In reality, however, matters are often much more complicated. In this content analysis the coder-trainers designed the content analysis, whereas the additional coders were trained with an already finalized codebook. They had to adopt the coding protocol as it was determined by the coder-trainers. Furthermore, each coder individually coded less material than the coder-trainers. As a result, it is likely that the coder-trainers had a better feeling for the subtleties of the categorization scheme than the regular coders. Drawing on Peter and Lauf, it is in such a case wise to distinguish between senior coders - the two coder-trainers - and regular coders, in which case the coding decisions of the senior coders is given primacy above those of the regular coders.<sup>50</sup> This line of reasoning is supported by the solid intercoder reliability level (Krippendorff's alpha of .79) between both coder-trainers on what proved to be the hardest category, genre, in terms of reliability.

From this perspective the regular coders can be seen as an extension of the coder-trainers, who could benefit from the knowledge of the senior coders when they are in doubt about a coding decision. For that reason, deliberation between senior coders and regular coders was allowed in case of a particularly arduous coding decision.<sup>51</sup> Because of the authoritative position of the senior coders such a form of deliberation benefits the reliability and accuracy of the content analysis.

This pragmatic approach is also supported by the pluriform nature of the material of this content analysis. The historical and cultural variety of the dailies means that the samples always contain cases in which it is hard to determine to which genre for instance an article belongs. Because of the wide range of material, it is also nearly impossible to do a pilot that covers all the potential manifestations of a certain coding category; new or unfamiliar manifestations always pop up. Furthermore, newspapers are 'creatures of habit' with many reoccurring formats.<sup>52</sup> To be able to recognize such formats, it is necessary to have a strong overview of the broad range of material, in which coding experience plays an important role. In this respect, the senior coders could also offer the regular coders the necessary support. For similar reasons, every coder (senior coders included) also kept a log during the coding process that the other coders could consult, in which organizational regularities and reoccurring columns and authors were recorded.

Ultimately the proof of the reliability is in its testing, which is a necessity for every content analysis. Low reliability is the best indicator that category definitions remain unclear or that the results of the coder training are not satisfactory.<sup>53</sup> Both groups of coders were therefore subjected to an intercoder reliability test, which can be defined as measuring the extent of the "agreement among coders about categorizing content."<sup>54</sup> The division with regard to the material these groups coded was extended to the intercoder reliability test, which consisted of a cross-section of only Dutch and British and of French content respectively. To scrutinize the reliability in the strictest way, no form of supervision was allowed during the intercoder reliability test. Every coder coded the selected material independently, which means that the results of the intercoder reliability test reflect the very bottom

49 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 133; see also: Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 217.

50 Peter & Lauf, "Cross-National Content Analysis," 815-832.

51 Such deliberation generally occurred only a few times during a working day.

52 Cf. Broersma, "Nooit meer bladeren?," 29-37; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," ix.

53 Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, "Reporting of Intercoder Reliability," 589.

54 Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 123.

level of the reliability level - something I will elaborate on in the following paragraph. By training the coders, making them acquainted with the material, keeping coding logs, supervising them, and ultimately testing for reliability we have attempted to overcome the methodological challenges as good as possible. Yet, this does not remove the fact that the attempt to use a quantitative method in such an elaborate historical and cross-national design is a novel approach, which makes it inherently exploratory in its nature.

Next to these complex methodological considerations, there are also more straightforward practical sides to the collection and maintenance of such a large amount of data. While entering the data into a database, it is for instance very easy to make small errors. Such inaccuracies however can have quite an impact on the results. Forgetting to put a comma while entering the size of an article can easily lead to a rather far-reaching distortion of, for instance, the importance of politics as a topic in a newspaper. To keep the data as free of human mistakes as possible, a relational database was designed in MS Access, in which a fool proof coding form was available to the coders. After the coding was finished the data was inspected for missing or suspicious entries that indicated inaccuracies in the input. Such entries were double checked, and if necessary supplemented or corrected. But apart from the 'ghost records', data was never deleted.<sup>55</sup>

## Reporting and calculating intercoder reliability

Lombard, Snyder-Duch and Bracken have showed that reporting intercoder reliability is still not standard practice for scholars performing content analyses. They studied a sample of articles in which content analysis was used and found that only 69% of the articles presented a general report of the intercoder reliability. This raised the question whether in the other cases an actual intercoder reliability test was performed. Moreover, only 41% of the articles report intercoder reliability for specific variables, instead of giving an average number.<sup>56</sup> An average can hide the unreliability of specific variables. For instance, determining whether an article has direct quotes or not is a much more straightforward - and subsequently more reliable - choice than determining to which genre an article belongs. Taking the average of the intercoder reliability scores of multiple variables obscures the actual reliability of the separate variables, and could disguise the fact that one of the variables dips below the accepted level of reliability.<sup>57</sup> Thus, without accompanying intercoder reliability levels of the separate variables the value of the results of a content analysis remains opaque.

There are several formulas to calculate intercoder reliability. The most relevant in this context are: percentage agreement, Scott's pi, Cohen's Kappa, and Krippendorff's alpha.<sup>58</sup> These different coefficients can be divided in two categories: those that take into account the influence of chance and the ones that do not, respectively the latter three and the first one. Content analysis scholars have not reached agreement about which coefficient is the best choice. Percentage agreement has been criticized for being too liberal, whereas the methods discounting for chance have been criticized

<sup>55</sup> Ghost records refer to the empty records that are automatically created by MS Access during the coding process. They only consist of an automatically assigned record ID and contain no actual data.

<sup>56</sup> Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, "Reporting of Intercoder Reliability," 595-599; see also the slightly older research by Daniel Riffe & Alan Freitag, "A Content Analysis of Content Analyses: Twenty-Five Years of Journalism Quarterly," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 74, no.4 (1997): 873-882; for a recent example, cf. De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*.

<sup>57</sup> Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 142-143.

<sup>58</sup> Other coefficients are either not relevant for this kind of content analysis with mostly nominal data, or they have been discarded as unreliable. For more information, see: Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 148-166.

for being overly conservative.<sup>59</sup> Especially in cases, in which the number of coding categories is small (for instance when the options are 'yes' or 'no') and are not evenly distributed, the latter reliability coefficients over-correct for chance.<sup>60</sup> As this applies to several variables of the content analysis in this research (for instance, in the sample years before the Second World War the question whether an article contains direct quotes or not mostly has a negative answer) it is wise to also report percentage agreement. For these reasons, I have always reported both percentage agreement and Krippendorff's alpha, which is seen as the most sophisticated measure discounting for change. This way both a liberal and a conservative coefficient are reported.<sup>61</sup> The intercoder reliability was calculated by using ReCal, a software program created by Deen Freelon, which is available freely on his website.<sup>62</sup>

Compiling the material for an intercoder reliability test has proven to be quite complicated. On the one hand, it requires a random sample, whereas on the other hand it also needs to convey a balanced reflection of the variety of the material. It is especially important to follow the specific distribution of genres and topics. If, for example, an average newspaper consists for more than half of news reports, more than half of the articles of the intercoder reliability test should also be news reports. Yet, all the different genres need to be accounted for as well.

Furthermore, the different newspapers, countries and time periods should also be represented equally. This last condition raises another problem: as a result of the aforementioned assignment of coders to specific parts of the material, not every coder has coded material from all countries, newspaper types and time periods. To account for all of these conditions, it would have been necessary to make many different intercoder reliability tests that specifically focused on one or two coders, which in turn would have compromised the idea of everybody working in a similar fashion. Due to time and financial restrictions, this was not possible. In the end we devised two intercoder reliability tests: one for the coders who coded both Dutch and British newspapers and the other for those coding the French newspapers. The two coder-trainers were subjected to both tests. The first test consisted of material from all the different Dutch and British dailies throughout the entire period. The second test was the same, but consisted only of French material.

The discrepancy between the coders' focus on a specific part of the material and the broad range of the material that was used for the intercoder reliability test shows again the stringency of the way reliability was tested. This is another reason why I would argue that the outcome of the intercoder reliability tests conveys a rather stringent measure of the reliability of the entire content analysis.

The question remains what level of intercoder reliability should be achieved. Scholars have not reached consensus about this. The levels that are used in different research articles range roughly between .67 and .9 (on a scale from 0 to 1). Krippendorff for example indicates that .8 is an adequate level of reliability, but reliability levels approaching .67 can also be acceptable. In general, the conservative measures are generally afforded a more lenient level than percentage agreement.<sup>63</sup>

59 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 148-151; Riffe, Lacy & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 147-148; Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Bracken, "Reporting of Intercoder Reliability," 590-593; For an alternative argument denying the liberal-conservative opposition, cf. Klaus Krippendorff, "Reliability in Content Analysis: Some Common Misconceptions and Recommendations," *Human Communication Research* 30, no.3 (2004): 411-433.

60 Potter, W.J. & Levine-Donnerstein, D., "Rethinking validity and reliability in content analysis," *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 27, no.3 (1999): 258-284; cf. Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 151.

61 The choice to report Krippendorff's alpha is infused by suggestions of experts like Neuendorf, Riffe, Lacy, Fico, Lombard, Snyder-Duch and Bracken, who all emphasize the sophisticated calculation method of Krippendorff's alpha, cf. Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 148-151; Riffe, Lacy & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 152; Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, "Reporting of Intercoder Reliability," 592-593.

62 See: [www.dfreelon.org](http://www.dfreelon.org); cf. Deen Freelon, "ReCal: Intercoder Reliability Calculation as a Web Service," *International Journal of Internet Science* 5, no.1 (2010): 20-33.

63 Neuendorf, *Guidebook*, 143; Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Bracken, "Reporting of Intercoder Reliability," 593; cf. Riffe, Lacy & Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages*, 147-153.

What is important to note is that although determining the acceptable level of reliability is to a certain extent arbitrary, it affects the persuasive power of the conclusions of a research. Because of the exploratory character of this research, the latent nature of many of the content variables and the stringent set up of particularly the first intercoder reliability test, I think it is wise to use reliability levels that are not too severe, which will be discounted in the conclusion.<sup>64</sup> Therefore, a reliability level around .8 is considered solid, but .67 is also still considered to be acceptable. Apart from the variable genre in the first intercoder reliability test, every variable has a reliability level (Krippendorff's alpha) between .7 and .8 and a percentage agreement of at least 79%, but most often considerably higher. The reliability results of genre show more variation. The senior coders reached a reliability level of .8 between them. The reliability between all the regular coders was .67 in case of the Dutch-British group and .83 for the French group, which can be ascribed to the different way the intercoder reliability test was set up.

Table 3a & 3b

Dutch and British papers	Percentage agreement	Krippendorff's alpha	French papers	Percentage agreement	Krippendorff's alpha
Direct quotes	93%	0.77	Direct quotes	90%	0.81
Genre	77%	0.67	Genre	85%	0.83
Topic	79%	0.77	Topic	80%	0.78
Source	88%	0.71	Source	88%	0.76
Image	95%	0.79	Image	92%	0.88

The difference between the intercoder reliability with regard to genre is conspicuous and has to do with the fact that the two groups of coders had to be tested separately for reliability because of the different language the dailies were written in. Our first reliability test consisted of a cross-selection of all the genres, not accounting for their proportionate appearance within the research material; news reports appear much more often than columns, background pieces far more often than editorials. For that reason coders had far less experience with coding certain genres than with others (especially when they only coded material from a certain historical period and some genres, like the column, only really manifested themselves either earlier or later). For that reason, in the second reliability test concerning the French material the selection of genres was more proportionate, which clearly influenced the reliability results, which in my opinion is a better reflection of the actual coding process.

In this research project I have not performed statistical modeling to support my conclusions. The complexity of the research design demanded advanced statistical models. Such statistical modelling went beyond the scope of this research project as it exceeded the expertise of the researchers involved. However, I have performed an exploratory statistical analysis on this data to explore the possibility that a statistical model could meaningfully support and strengthen the examination of the data for longitudinal (over time) and comparative (between different national newspapers) trends. For this I have used a traditional analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to explore the differences between newspapers over time. This inquiry showed that in many cases such an analysis offers support for my analysis, especially for the variable categories that are well represented in the data. Consequently,

64 Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Bracken, "Reporting of Intercoder Reliability," 593.

it suggests there is value in such statistical modeling for this type of research. Yet, it also raises questions that need to be answered before such forms of statistical analysis can become a fruitful research tool within the framework of this type of research. For instance, what is the influence of the stratified sampling method on the data distribution and subsequent statistical analyses? What is the influence of the scarcity of certain genres for trustworthiness of the sampling method? What would be the optimal statistical model to analyze the data? The combination of a historical cross-national approach to the development of journalism suggests that a multilevel model (random effect analysis) would be a suitable way to approach such complex data. With the growing importance of 'digital humanities' research projects, in which traditional humanities topics and research questions are often approached with new set of methods that are often borrowed from the social sciences it is crucial to further investigate the way statistical modelling can be employed meaningfully and in a trustworthy manner.

## Conceptions of journalism - a tentative operationalization

In order to be able to discern the development of the different journalistic conceptions based on the quantitative data, it is necessary to operationalize the three respective practices beforehand in terms of their textual characteristics. I have therefore assigned the different categories of the variables to one of the three conceptions, creating three textual profiles. Without such an operationalization little can be said about the way different journalistic conceptions developed and interacted with each other.

With regard to event-centered journalism in general, it is expected that these articles contain more sources and direct quotes than reflective journalism. The use of sources and direct quotes speaks to the factual accountability of the journalism practice. In the choice of genres, event-centered journalism is also believed to be opposite to reflective journalism, which is supposed to mainly consist of reflective genres, like background analyses, opinionated articles, and essays. This practice is also considered to focus more on concise news reports, minute-like reports,<sup>65</sup> and active reporting genres, like the reportage and the interview.

Concerning the topical orientation, the two event-centered journalistic conceptions go separate ways. Event-centered story journalism is believed to focus more on human interest, lifestyle and sports, whereas event-centered information journalism is considered to concentrate on politics, international affairs and economics. The latter also holds for reflective journalism, and on the topical level these two conceptions are rather close. Finally, event-centered story journalism is said to consist of much more images than both event-centered information and reflective journalism.

The operationalization of these three conceptions of journalism already shows some overlap. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind the ideal-typical status of the conceptions, and the results also show that in reality dailies often borrow features from more than one conception of journalism.

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<sup>65</sup> As I will discuss in the following chapter I distinguish between the terms news reports, (minute-like) reports and reportages, which refer to different journalistic genres.



## Case study research

The content analysis shows the broad journalistic developments over time, it conveys transnational similarities, and it points to certain idiosyncrasies of journalism practice on a national level. However, what goes beyond the scope of such a quantitative approach are complex questions about the way narrative characteristics relate to the dominant features of journalistic discourse or how such textual features have influenced the status and role of the reportage within a journalistic culture. These questions into the discursive characteristics of the genre can much better be tackled by doing an in-depth analysis of the textual and contextual features of an obviously far smaller set of reportages. This way, a journalistic text is not chopped up into several textual characteristics and isolated from its context, but studied in its narrative and contextual coherence.

The question I want to elucidate with these case studies is in what way the reportage has developed in the Great Britain, the Netherlands and France throughout the research period. Focusing on the textual characteristics of the genre in relation to its position within journalism discourse sheds light on the way the competing journalistic conceptions were trying to gain or maintain a dominant role within the journalistic discourse of the respective countries. This revolves for an important part on the way journalism has dealt with the inherently subjective nature of reporting, which is a central issue within the development of the reportage. As a result, the focus will be on those textual features that pertain to the role of the reporter as subjective intermediary between reality and the public, like the choice of narrative perspective, the use of quotes or dialogue, thought representation and reflection, the use of imagery, and the tone of the account. The results of these case studies function as an illustration and in-depth analysis of the general results of the content analysis. The broad categories that are used in the quantitative analysis are fleshed out in the case studies, where they can be analyzed in more detail. In turn, the quantitative results offer a solid and representative frame of reference for the qualitative analysis, thereby suggesting and elucidating the extent and impact of the journalistic features that are analyzed in the case studies.

## Case study design

The term 'case study' is regularly mentioned in research, but especially in the humanities scholars all too often fail to reflect on the function, design and limitations of the use of a case study. Case study research is generally theorized from the perspective of the social sciences.<sup>66</sup> A case study in its basic form can be defined as "the fundamental descriptive material an observer has assembled by whatever means available about some particular phenomenon or set of events."<sup>67</sup> This method fits the qualitative aims of this part of the research, because of its 'holistic' approach; it aims to study a certain phenomenon in all its complexity, taking into account the multiple relations it maintains with its context.<sup>68</sup> This approach shows many similarities to historiography, which by and large attempts to do the same.<sup>69</sup> However, where contemporary case studies generally can consult many different sources for data, such diversity is limited in historical case studies. This applies even stronger to my cases. Apart from France, which has a traditional focus on the reportage, not that much prior

<sup>66</sup> Although research in the humanities often uses cases, there is hardly anything written about the methodology of case studies. This is a pity, because case study research in the humanities could certainly benefit from more methodological reflection.

<sup>67</sup> J. Clyde Mitchell, "Case and Situation Analysis," in *Case Study Method. Key Issues, Key Texts*, ed. Roger Gomm, Martyn Hammersley & Peter Foster (London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000), 168.

<sup>68</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, 13-14; Pamela Baxter & Susan Jack, "Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers," *The Qualitative Report* 13, no.4 (2008): 545.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. James Startt & William David Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication* (Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989), 141-155.

research has been done into the history of the newspaper reportage or into particular reporters. This meant that finding relevant material has been a highly time consuming endeavor. In such cases, the combination of the abundance of material with the scarcity of prior research into specific historical cases and individual reporters made outlining case studies a difficult process; it often felt like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Before designing a case study, which can be done in different ways, it is important to determine what the aim of the case study is. Is it an attempt to get a better understanding of one specific phenomenon in itself (intrinsic case study), or is the case selected to elucidate and illustrate a more abstract or encompassing issue, that can be examined through that particular case (instrumental case study)? Is it an initial and tentative examination of a phenomenon (exploratory case study), or is it a case used to test well-delineated hypotheses (explanatory case study)?<sup>70</sup> Of course, these different types are not clearly separated from each other, and a case might have multiple aims. Nevertheless, it is important to think about such questions beforehand, because it helps determine the way a case study should be designed. Most of the cases in this research are instrumental, for acquiring information about the journalists and their work that I analyze in these cases is not a goal in itself. Through the analysis of a set of reportages around a certain event or issue, in most cases written by particular esteemed and influential journalists, I have attempted to reify certain key reporting developments that the results of the content analysis displayed. Moreover, I have analyzed the narrative techniques and stylistic devices certain esteemed reporters employed in more detail to see how they relate to the asserted norms or routines. This is exactly the added value of this complementary qualitative approach in this thesis. The systematic nature of a quantitative content analysis does not allow for a detailed analysis of the genre characteristics in all their complexity and coherence, thwarting the depth of the analysis. As a result, a complex genre as the reportage also demands a qualitative analysis, in which its textual characteristics can be analyzed more meticulously. In the case studies, key issues in the development of reporting can be fleshed out through a narrative analysis of the reportages.

Every case study is focused on a particular event or issue within a specific period of time and illustrates certain important characteristics of the developments of the reportage in relation to reporting in general. All four case studies consist of three smaller cases. Each of them scrutinizes a set of reportages, ideally written by one or two influential reporters, which have played an important part in the journalistic domain for each of the countries.<sup>71</sup> To make clear what the position of these reporters were within the journalistic domain and what role they have played in journalism history, the analyses of the reportages are thoroughly embedded in their historical context and draw on relevant previous research. By focusing on the reportages of individual reporters I can complement the general image of the content analysis - which mainly maps the large-scale international and transnational differences - by adding an extra perspective to the research. This perspective takes into account that certain reporters have or have had an influential role within journalism and represent a particular discursive development. Looking at the reportages of such esteemed journalists can shed light on interesting characteristics of journalistic discourse in a certain country throughout a certain period.

Apart from the texts themselves, the journalistic discourse of the specific period has also been examined by looking at (auto-)biographical information of the specific journalists, positioning them

70 Cf. Baxter & Jack, "Qualitative Case Study Methodology," 547-549; Yin, *Case Study Research*, 39-53; Robert Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks/London/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1995), 3-4.

71 In a few cases it was impossible to stick to one or two reporters, because the author of the articles could not be identified.

within the cultural domain and the journalistic field in particular. Furthermore, within the framework of the case studies, I have occasionally integrated information from interviews these reporters have given about their profession, what other journalists have said or written about these reporters in relation to journalism. Finally, I have studied newspaper histories and other material that can shed light on the journalistic discourse of the period at hand. This way a balanced and rich image can be rendered of the reportage in its journalistic context, and questions about the possible tension of the genre in relation to important discursive norms can be answered satisfactorily.

The reportages that are analyzed in these case studies are certainly not representative for the entire reporting coverage, but they flesh out and illustrate certain key developments in reporting within journalism discourse. In some cases the focus is therefore on certain esteemed frontrunners that played an important part in determining the manner in which reporting developed, whereas others illustrate the textual characteristics of a more dominant reporting practice by analyzing the reportages that were written about a certain event or chain of events. The first case study concentrates on reportages about World War I, written by esteemed reporters that can be regarded as innovators with regard to the reporting routines. The second case study illustrates the key characteristics of the professional reporting standards by focusing on reportages about the colonies. In France and the Netherlands the focus is on esteemed reporters that embody the professional reporting ideals in that period. Yet, during this period Britain individual reporters had a less autonomy and did not operate as independently from the editorial structure of the paper. Moreover, the coverage I have focused on was anonymous, which is why I have selected a more diverse set of reportages to illustrate the key features of reporting in this period. In the third case study, I have for similar reasons analyzed a diverse set of reportages from each country about the Parisian Revolt, which were written by a variety of reporters. This analysis allowed me to flesh out the textual characteristics of the growing dominance of the objectivity regime.

Considering the lack of information about the coverage of specific events or about particular journalists and their reporting - especially in Great Britain - these case studies often embark on largely unknown territory and therefore have a somewhat exploratory character. The final case study in particular, however, is typified specifically by its exploratory nature. The contemporary context of that case has made it much harder to assess the status and position of the selected journalists in relation to their cultural and historical context. In the last case I have therefore deliberately looked at an interesting variety of journalists, who have integrated storytelling techniques in their reportages. Although, these reporters are considered esteemed reporters, who have an important voice within journalism discourse, the lasting impact on journalism discourse cannot be determined yet and their status within the journalistic domain is therefore less clear.

As every case study focuses on all three countries the case studies have a multiple case design in which similar cases in different contexts are selected.<sup>72</sup> The natural intricacy of the historical material I am dealing with makes it obviously difficult to find cases in which the country of origin is the only variable that diverges. This is a common problem with historical cases, and can never be avoided entirely. Moreover, the pioneering character of the selection of the material - and the availability of the dailies - made it at times necessary to make a more pragmatic choice. For these reasons the justification of the cases will receive ample attention in every empirical section of this thesis.

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<sup>72</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, 46-51.

A multiple case design is often aimed at replication of the results, thereby reinforcing the conclusions of the individual cases.<sup>73</sup> However, in my case study design the three cases are taken from three different countries and different results are expected. So it is no surprise if the results of the individual cases do not replicate each other. However, the results can reinforce each other on a more theoretical level, which relates to the issue of generalization. It is impossible to generalize the results from one or only a few cases to an entire population, and for that reason case study research is often underappreciated or even dismissed altogether as a reliable way of doing research.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, the merit of case study research is not found in its generalizing power in terms of a sample reflecting the entire population like in quantitative research. However, case study research can offer a different form of generalization for which Yin has coined the term “analytic generalization”.<sup>75</sup> With this term, Yin refers to the possibility of the results of case study research to support, elaborate, nuance, or challenge certain theoretical notions about a phenomenon.<sup>76</sup> My specific multiple-case design, for instance, elucidates and illustrates the way journalistic norms and routines translate into narrative characteristics of the reportage. Moreover, it sheds light on the different discursive layers of a pivotal concept like objectivity.

The case studies thus offer a rich and necessary addition - and nuance in certain cases - to the results of the content analysis. It offers the possibility to zoom in on insightful cases within journalism history and on esteemed and influential reporters who left their mark on journalism practice within a certain period in time. Moreover, a detailed and in-depth examination of the way the textual conventions are shaped in relation to competing norms and routines in all three countries illustrates certain key issues of the general development of reporting and further develops insight in the way norms, routines and textual conventions interact within journalism discourse.

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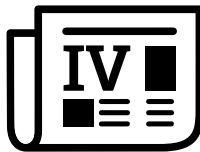
<sup>73</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, 48.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Nina Baur & Siegfried Lamnek, “Einzelfallanalyse,” in *Qualitative Medienforschung. Ein Handbuch*, ed. Lothar Mikos & Claudia Wegener (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2005), 241-252; Peter Swanborn, *Case Study Research. What, Why and How?* (Los Angeles/London/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2010), 66-70; Yvonna Lincoln & Egon Guba, “The Only Generalization is: There is No Generalization,” in *Case Study Method. Key Issues, Key Texts*, ed. Roger Gomm, Martyn Hammersley & Peter Foster (London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000), 27-44.

<sup>75</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, 31-33, 37.

<sup>76</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, 31-33, 37; cf. Mitchell, “Case and Situation Analysis,” 174-183.





# Journalistic overtures

1880-1914

The period between 1880 and the First World War has often been characterized as Western journalism's formative years. In this period, journalism is believed to have adopted the self-image of society's watchdog by guarding the public interest and to have developed a distinct professional discursive practice that has remained dominant to this day.<sup>1</sup> My thesis focuses on the latter and traces its development throughout journalism history. Prior research has shown that this 'new journalism' manifested itself from roughly the 1880s onwards and is said to have shaken the journalistic domain to its foundations.<sup>2</sup> Before the advent of the emerging new journalistic practices, dailies mainly dealt with (foreign) politics, international relations, business news, government announcements and *faits divers*, consisting of reports of crime or uncanny occurrences. The journalistic domain was dominated by desk-bound editors passively relaying information provided by others and publicists or 'men of letters' who contributed reflective and opinionated articles to the paper.<sup>3</sup> Journalism was not yet a clearly demarcated domain or profession. According to Matheson, up until the 1880s journalism lacked its own voice, or in other words its own discursive mode, and borrowed its forms mainly from political and literary discourse.<sup>4</sup>

The rise of new journalism meant that journalists started delineating their own professional discursive mode, with which they set themselves off from political and literary discourse. This development of journalism shows a complex dialectic. The professionalization of journalists contributed to its cultural authority to scrutinize the people in power, but at the same time it is an expression of this growing authority as well. The existing scholarship about journalism's emerging position as society's watchdog generally points to two underlying discursive developments: a shift from passive desk-bound journalism to more active reporting routines, like on-site observation and interviewing, and a shift in the self-image of journalists from opinionated intellectual to objective reporter. In short, the definition of 'news' changed - and would keep evolving for that matter. What was considered newsworthy information, how this information should be obtained, and how it should be presented was evolving and the horizon of newspaper journalism was expanding. The emphasis on factual news was growing, anticipating the credo "comment is free, but facts are sacred"

1 Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 1, 127-133; Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 10-15; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xi-xii, xxv-xxviii; Pöttker, "Perspectives," 270-272.

2 Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvii; cf. Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 9-15; Wiener, "How New," 50; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 39-45; Delparte, *Les journalistes*, 14-15.

3 De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 17; Broersma, "Daily Truth," 24-28; Asa Briggs & Peter Burke, *Sociale geschiedenis van de media. Van boekdrukkunst tot internet* (Amsterdam: SUN, 2003), 95.

4 Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 562-564; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 127-133; Mark Hampton, "Journalists and the 'Professional Ideal' in Britain: the Institute of Journalists, 1884-1907," in *Historical Research* 72, no. 178 (1999): 192; Mark Hampton, "Defining Journalists in Late-Nineteenth Century Britain," in *Critical Studies in Media communication* 22, no.2 (2005): 139.

that C.P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, declared in 1921.<sup>5</sup>

My thesis supports the idea that journalism practice experienced a development, which emphasized event-centered reporting and asserted the importance of facts. However, by looking at the actual textual characteristics of the journalistic articles, the gradual and cautious nature of this change becomes apparent. My results illustrate for instance that what exactly constituted a fact was not clearly and narrowly delineated yet. And the term certainly did not refer to information that was void of any form of subjectivity - as it is generally conceived within the objectivity regime. What was counted a fact was determined from a broad 'naïve empiricist' perspective, in which facts were still closely connected to somebody's direct observations and perception. The fuzziness surrounding this concept is all too often disregarded and the growing focus on factuality has subsequently been equated with the rise of the objectivity regime.

This rather crude perspective on the role facts have played in the rise of objectivity has also infused the instrumental perspective on the way the changes on the different levels of discourse (norms, routines, forms) are connected. Many scholars - with Chalaby as a prime example - consider these levels to be inextricably tied together. For that reason, the strong focus on facts is often presented as compelling evidence for the rise of a professional framework in which all subjectivity is removed from journalism practice. These scholars fail to acknowledge the strategic role such a description of journalism practice played - and still plays - in the debate about journalism. It is not necessarily accompanied by a matching way of structuring and organizing the reporting process, nor do the assertions about journalism always correspond to the characteristics on the textual level.<sup>6</sup>

The straightforward and instrumental perspective on journalism practice has resulted in an oversimplified image of the historical development of journalism. It fails to acknowledge the gradual pace of the process, and disregards the complex interaction between the 'traditional' outlook on journalism, in which facts and opinion were not that stringently separated, and the newly emerging conceptions of event-centered journalism. Moreover, this approach does not ascribe enough weight to the influence of the disparities within journalistic cultures. My analysis suggests a more nuanced and pluriform image of the changes journalism experienced in this period. By examining the actual texts in the dailies - the discursive level this dissertation focuses on - between 1880 and 1914, the image arises of a journalism practice that was still very much in its infancy.

Press historians have shown that within this period the institutional organization of the journalistic domain in all three countries changed in a fundamental way, enabling the rise of a commercial mass press. This development was accompanied by a heated discussion about the nature and role of newspaper journalism and the standards it should live up to. In 1887 British poet and cultural critic Matthew Arnold coined the term 'new journalism', which he used to refer to several newly established and commercially oriented dailies. By calling them "feather-brained" Arnold pointed to the, in his eyes, declining journalistic quality, igniting a heated discussion about the rise of the commercial or 'popular' press.<sup>7</sup> Still, these debates about the standards of journalism meant only the beginning of a much longer transformation process into a distinct profession. Journalism remained a highly permeable domain and an open occupation.

My analysis shows that journalists were busy experimenting with new routines, forms and

<sup>5</sup> Scott cited in: Jane Singer & Ian Ashman, "'Comment is Free, but Facts are Sacred': User-generated Content and Ethical Constructs at the *Guardian*," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 24, no.3 (2009): 4; Hampton, "The 'Objectivity' Ideal," 482-483; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xv-xviii; Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 11.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 127-140; Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 11-14; cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvii-xviii.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew Arnold, "Up to Easter," *Nineteenth Century* 21 (1887), 638, cited in: Wiener, "How New," 47; cf. Brake, "The Old Journalism," 1-2.

lay-out, but that these had not crystallized yet. The objectivity regime as a professional framework was certainly not in place in this period. Rather, it seems that the first seeds for the journalistic transformation were planted, but did not blossom before decades. Compared to France and the Netherlands these changes occurred somewhat earlier in the press in Great Britain, but also on a much smaller scale than is generally assumed. As I have pointed out in the introduction of this thesis, for quite some time press historians have been relying too much on the institutional changes and the debates about journalism for their depiction of the journalistic development on a discursive level. My thesis therefore offers an adjustment of this image by showing that only after World War II these new norms, routines and forms became fully accepted. In the period before, they should therefore certainly not be regarded as the self-evident organizing principles of journalism discourse in the three countries at hand.

## The rise of a mass press

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century several societal, technological and political developments and changes came together. Together they created a fertile environment for the gradual transformation that journalism would undergo throughout the long 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although scholars disagree about the extent of their significance three major historical factors are always mentioned in relation to the development of journalism: the legal establishment of economic and political press freedom, the emergence of a literate and relatively affluent working and (lower) middle class, and, finally, the rapid technological and infrastructural innovations throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup>

Until 1861 for Great Britain, 1869 for the Netherlands, and 1880 for France, newspapers were still kept in check by forms of censorship. In Britain and the Netherlands direct censorship had been abolished earlier on and both countries relied on indirect means to control the press. These measures consisted of a smart use of the existing libel laws and several economic duties or so-called 'taxes on knowledge' of which the stamp duty was the most important one.<sup>9</sup> The stamp duty was basically a tax on the diffusion of newsworthy information. Every newspapers copy had to have this expensive stamp of approval. Similar indirect measures were also in place in France, but state control was more severe. Moreover, direct censorship was enforced up until 1881.<sup>10</sup>

In Britain the taxes on knowledge had given rise to underground newspapers, better known as the 'radical press'. These unstamped papers either refused to pay these taxes on knowledge, which meant distributing the paper clandestinely, or they dodged the duties by satisfying the rather complex set of criteria, concerning smaller size of the paper and content lacking news value, that entitled them to freely distribute the paper.<sup>11</sup> Such papers were often focused on the poorer segments of the working class, which could not afford the stamped papers, or on small groups with rather radical social and

8 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 18-19; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvii; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 75-85; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 24-28, 52-59, 76-82; Schudson, *Discovery of News*, 88-106; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 32-48; Lee, "Structure, Ownership and Control," 118-120; Dick van Lente, "Drukkers, papiermachines en lezerspubliek: de verhouding tussen technische en culturele ontwikkelingen in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw," in *Bladeren in andermans hoofd*, ed. Theo Bijvoet et al. (Nijmegen: Sun, 1996), 246-263; Maarten Schneider & Joan Hemels, *De Nederlandse krant 1618-1978. Van 'nieuwstydninghe' tot dagblad* (Baarn: Het Wereldvenster, 1979), 190-191; Frank van Vree, "Massapers en modernisering: de pers als spiegel en oorzaak van maatschappelijke verandering," in *Tekens en teksten: cultuur, communicatie en maatschappelijke veranderingen vanaf de late middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam: AUP, 1992), 98-100.

9 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 62-63; Schneider & Hemels, *Nederlandse krant*, 170-173; Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 147; De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 32.

10 Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 50-59.

11 Schneider & Hemels, *Nederlandse krant*, 175-177; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 85-91; Christoph Charle, *Le siècle de la presse (1830-1939)* (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 2004), 33-34.



political ideas.<sup>12</sup> In the Netherlands and France restrictions were stronger, and although journalists protested against these measures and certain papers attempted - and sometimes succeeded - to dodge the stamp tax, no real underground press emerged.<sup>13</sup>

Great Britain was the first to gradually liberalize these legal impediments from the 1830s onwards, with the abolishment of the taxes on paper as the final step in 1861.<sup>14</sup> The Netherlands quickly followed with the repeal of stamp duties in 1869. France was the last in line. Although legislative changes in 1868 already meant an important step forward towards press freedom, political and economic censorship lasted up until 1881.<sup>15</sup> The liberalization and finally abolishment of these laws and duties throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century made it possible for dailies to publish what they wanted, and for a much lower price. As a result the repeal of the newspaper taxes made journalism a potentially much more profitable market, which gave a great impulse to the newspaper business and opened the doors for the emergence of a mass press.<sup>16</sup>

The improving commercial circumstances, enabling the emergence of the mass press, are intricately related with the rise of a consumer culture in roughly the same period. As the result of the industrial revolution and the subsequent strong urbanization in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the affluence of the working and (lower) middle class had increased as well as their level of education. Furthermore, the supply and demand of consumer goods had increased considerably.<sup>17</sup> With their potential to reach large groups of people, newspapers formed the perfect vehicle for companies to advertise their goods. In turn, the advertisement revenues allowed for the dailies to drop their cover price, enabled them to create the right journalistic circumstances to appeal to an emerging readership from the lower classes in society, and turned dailies into potentially very profitable businesses.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, technological and infrastructural advancements, such as the invention of the telegraph and the construction of the transatlantic cable connection, new printing and typesetting techniques, and the improving railway network, made it possible to quickly send information over long distances, thus speeding up the dissemination of information a great deal.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, paper became much cheaper from the moment it was made of wood pulp instead of rags.<sup>20</sup> One of the reasons *The Times*, for instance, became Britain's leading daily in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was its technological edge on the competition. In 1866 their advanced rotary press could publish 12,000 entire newspaper copies (generally 12 or 16 pages) per hour, whereas in 1812 was only able to only produce 250 much smaller copies (4 pages) per hour.<sup>21</sup>

These developments, which of course did not take place from one day to the next, paved the way

<sup>12</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 87-93.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 32, 40-42; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 33-34, 43, 85-94.

<sup>14</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 93-96.

<sup>15</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 18-19; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 26-28, 52-59.

<sup>16</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 99; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 59-60; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 18-19.

<sup>17</sup> John Benson, *The Rise of Consumer Society in Britain 1880-1980* (London: Longman, 1994), 11-13, 50-51; Neil McKendrick, John Brewer & J. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society. The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 1-6; Rosalind Williams, *Dream Worlds. Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 1-16; Van Vree, "Massapers," 98-99.

<sup>18</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 76-81; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 76-77; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 42-43; Schneider & Hemels, *Nederlandse krant*, 190-191; Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 147-148; Van Vree, "Massapers," 99.

<sup>19</sup> Simone Müller-Pohl, "By Atlantic Telegraph" A Study on Weltcommunication in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century," *Medien & Zeit* 25, no.4 (2010): 40-41; Joel Wiener, "Get the News! Get the News!" - Speed in Transatlantic Journalism, 1830-1914," in *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850-2000*, ed. Joel Wiener & Mark Hampton (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 48-50; Michael Palmer, *Des petits journaux aux grandes agences: naissance du journalisme moderne, 1863-1914* (Paris: Aubier, 1983), 40-41; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 135; Jean-Noël Jeanneney, *Une histoire des médias. Des origines à nos jours* (Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1996), 86; Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 127-133.

<sup>20</sup> Stephens, *History of news*, xx.

<sup>21</sup> Gavin Astor, "The Thunderer," in *Fleet Street. The inside story of journalism*, ed. Vivian Brodsky (London, Macdonald, 1966), 45; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 84.

for a commercialized mass press in which news was - especially within Great Britain - gradually becoming a commodity. This process of commodification shows itself in the rapid rise of the news agencies. The foundation of *Agence Havas* (1835), *New York Associated Press* (1846), *Wolff's Telegraphisches Bureau* (1849), and *Reuter's cabled messages* (1851) should be seen as an early signal of this commercialization. Around roughly 1850 - the foundation of French news agency Havas in 1835 being an early exception - these agencies exploited the increasingly rapid access to and therefore growing abundance of news and sold newsworthy information to newspapers.<sup>22</sup> The news agencies thrived with the commercialization of the press landscape, but gradually got stronger competition from the dailies, which were in the course of organizing their own active collection of news through a growing network of professional reporters and correspondents. In general the newspaper business became more competitive in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Towards a more competitive press landscape

The technological, societal, and legal changes made dailies and thus news much more easily accessible to a growing number of people. With a total circulation of 54,000 (18 dailies for every 1000 inhabitants) in 1850 the Netherlands for instance had still a limited press market.<sup>23</sup> After the repeal of the newspaper duties the market grew rapidly with a total circulation of 189,000 in 1880 (47 for every 1000 inhabitants) and one million by 1910 (170 dailies for every 1000 inhabitants).<sup>24</sup> These absolute numbers are overshadowed by the French circulation of only the Parisian dailies which went up from two million in 1880 (73 for every 1000 inhabitants) to five and a half million by 1914 (244 dailies for every 1000 inhabitants).<sup>25</sup> Britain shows a similar picture with a total circulation of the London based dailies of four and a half million copies by 1914 (unfortunately, trustworthy figures of the relative circulation per 1000 inhabitants are not available for Great Britain in this period).<sup>26</sup> This immediately demonstrates the differences in the scale of the press landscape. The Netherlands had a rather small press market, but relatively speaking reached a similar or even larger share of the population than the British and French press.

The changing circumstances had made the newspaper business increasingly interesting from a commercial, ideological or political standpoint. Founding a newspaper in an era in which the readership was rapidly growing was a potentially profitable endeavor and a perfect means to get a certain message across to a large group of people. It is therefore not surprising that these novel circumstances led to an increase in the number of dailies resulting in a diversification of the respective press landscapes. Unfortunately, press historians do not agree on the exact numbers of national dailies in the three countries. Especially the various French and British press histories show different figures. Partially these figures differ, because what exactly constituted a national daily was very problematic in this period. The diffusion of most dailies could hardly be called national.

<sup>22</sup> Arianne Baggerman & Joan Hemels, *Verzorgd door het ANP: vijftig jaar nieuwsvoorziening* (Utrecht: Veen, 1985), 17-24; Palmer, *Petits journaux*, 41-45; Jürgen Wilke, "Belated Modernization: Form and Style in German Journalism 1880-1980," in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 57-58.

<sup>23</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 558; Jan van de Plasse & Wim Verbeij, *Kroniek van de Nederlandse dagblad- en opiniepers* (Amsterdam: O. Cramwinckel, 2005), 192.

<sup>24</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 558.

<sup>25</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 83.

<sup>26</sup> John McEwen, "The National Press during the First World War: Ownership and Circulation," *Journal of Contemporary History* 17, no.3 (1982): 468; A rough estimate of the total British population in 1900 was 38 million (based on: Julie Jeffries, *Focus on People and Migration* [n.p.]: Office for National Statistics, 2005), 3 [Consultable at: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/fertility-analysis/focus-on-people-and-migration/december-2005/focus-on-people-and-migration---focus-on-people-and-migration---chapter-1.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/fertility-analysis/focus-on-people-and-migration/december-2005/focus-on-people-and-migration---focus-on-people-and-migration---chapter-1.pdf)], which would make the relative circulation of the London based dailies more or less comparable to the Netherlands.

Furthermore, the difference between daily newspapers in the contemporary sense and specialized papers is also fuzzy, which has probably led to different choices by different researchers.<sup>27</sup> In the Netherlands the number of dailies increased from 9 in 1850 to 39 in 1880, and 70 by 1908.<sup>28</sup> With Paris as the beating heart of France the Parisian dailies were the most important on a national scale. The number of these dailies rose from roughly 25 in 1845, to approximately 60 around 1880, leading to more or less 80 dailies in 1914.<sup>29</sup> The British numbers are not as high. If we only look at morning and evening dailies in London we see a strong increase in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: with 15 dailies in 1856, 18 around 1880, 32 in 1900 and 34 by 1910.<sup>30</sup> In spite of the problematic status of these numbers, it is clear that in all the countries the number of dailies increased rapidly in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the newspaper business was blossoming.

The growing number of dailies led to a 'crowded' and therefore increasingly competitive press market. The dailies were involved in a struggle for readership, with in some cases the survival of the newspaper at stake. As I will show this competition gave a strong impulse for discursive innovation, but it should not be seen as the only incentive.<sup>31</sup> Research into the institutional organization of the journalistic domain has shown that Britain developed a highly commercialized newspaper market and profitability was a more important objective than in the Netherlands and France. This is inextricably tied to the much more prominent role advertisement played within the British press.<sup>32</sup> In general the commercialization of the newspaper landscape in Britain meant the first step towards a gradual change in the nature of the newspaper business from relatively small-scale family businesses with a political and idealistic outlook on journalism to larger newspaper concerns with share ownership, for which profitability was the most important aim.<sup>33</sup> The new newspaper owners, better known as 'press barons' with Lord Northcliffe as the most famous British example, were already affluent entrepreneurs who saw a daily as a fine commercial opportunity. Next to its appealing profitability owning a daily could also be beneficial to their position within the political and societal elite. However, any political goal they aspired to was generally made subservient to their commercial perspective on the newspaper business.<sup>34</sup> As Chalaby notes, this does not mean that their dailies provided a neutral perspective on political and societal issues, but they had cut the ties with a particular political party or ideology. Especially the opinions the popular dailies championed were often decided based on commercial rather than ideological considerations and often followed the preferences of their mass readership. This 'crusadism' proved to be a fruitful discursive strategy to gain readership.<sup>35</sup>

As a result of this strong commercial logic and increasing competition the former clandestine 'radical press' or unstamped papers could not keep afloat - which was part of the reason for the governments to repeal these laws. These dailies often did have a strong ideological focus and therefore appealed to a clearly confined audience instead of attempting to attract to the largest part of the public as possible. In some cases these dailies focused on a small politically radical elite, but

<sup>27</sup> Alan Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press 1855-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1976), 119-120; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 18-19; De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 186-187; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 23-30.

<sup>28</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 558.

<sup>29</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 83; For different figures, cf. Charle, *Siècle du presse*, 51, 138; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 44.

<sup>30</sup> Lee, *Popular Press*, 121; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 99; for different, higher figures, cf. Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 36-37.

<sup>31</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 319-322.

<sup>32</sup> Ivon Ashquit, "1785-1855," in *Newspaper History from the seventeenth century to the present day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978), 107; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 50-51, 76-77, 139-140.

<sup>33</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 139-140.

<sup>34</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 164-167; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 48-51; Jean Chalaby, "No Ordinary Press Owners: press barons as a Weberian ideal type," *Media, Culture & Society* 19, no.4 (1997): 622-625.

<sup>35</sup> Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 141-147.

more often their target audiences resided in the lower and financially less endowed classes. The latter were of little interest to advertisers or wealthy entrepreneurs that might invest in a daily. With the abolishment of the newspaper taxes the unstamped papers had lost their low-priced edge, and suddenly had to compete with their 'respectable' counterparts. Furthermore, although over a longer period of time the production costs were reduced, the initial necessary investments to start or maintain a competitive daily had increased considerably. New costly investments, such as state of the art printing presses and telegraph lines, demanded a considerable starting capital, which most of these radical papers could not raise.<sup>36</sup> As a result, many of the already existing radical newspapers perished and establishing a new daily of this kind had thus become increasingly difficult as well. The radical dailies that wanted to survive basically had two options: either change by adjusting their editorial content according to the standards of the mainstream press, subsequently expanding their target audience, or marginalize their position in the press landscape by raising their cover price and remain available for an even smaller affluent minority.<sup>37</sup> The commercialization of the press landscape thus played an important role in the relatively rapid decline of a partisan press in Great Britain. This has therefore played an important part in shaping the struggle between the different journalistic conceptions.

Similar inquiries into the French and Dutch press landscape point out that in these countries the commercial rationale was not as dominant as it was in Britain.<sup>38</sup> In these countries the dailies with a specific ideological orientation remained much more prominent.<sup>39</sup> Both in the Netherlands and in France several dailies were directly - although not always overtly - funded by the church or by a political party or movement and financial losses were taken for granted given the higher ideological goal.<sup>40</sup> In France this difference in rationale was recognized by the oppositional terms *presse d'opinion* and *presse d'information* that were used to categorize the dailies.<sup>41</sup> This rough division does not mean though that these two rationales could not complement each other.

These differences can also be discerned in the structure and organization of the press markets of the respective countries. Great Britain had an extensive press landscape with a large degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the state. On this liberalized press market dailies competed on a day to day basis for the favor of the public. This competition was not as strong in France and the Netherlands. The long lasting restrictive measures in France had thwarted the emergence of a commercialized newspaper business for a long time. Even after state control was relieved in 1880, government interference - open or covert - remained stronger in comparison to the Netherlands and Britain, and in combination with its lesser degree of industrialization the commercial expansion of the French press was less strong.<sup>42</sup> In the Netherlands all forms of censorship were abolished in 1869, but the Dutch newspaper business was also less commercialized and not as competitive as in Great Britain.

This lesser degree of competition within the Dutch and French press landscape was in part the result of the political parallelism; the organization of the press landscape mirrored the particular

36 James Curran, "The press as an agency of social control," in *Newspaper History from the seventeenth century to the present day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978), 67-70; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 49; Van Vree, "Massapers," 98-99; cf. Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 24-26.

37 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 87-91, 94-96; Curran, "Agency of social control," 69-70; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 59-63.

38 Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 320-322; Lee, "Ownership and control," 117-120; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," ix-xxix.

39 De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 158-163; Joan Hemels, *De Nederlandse pers voor en na de afschaffing van het dagbladzegel in 1869* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1969), 60-61, 70-71; Schneider & Hemels, *De Nederlandse krant*, 190-191.

40 Van Vree, "Massapers," 99; cf. Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 141-179; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 319-321.

41 Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 94.

42 Clyde Thogmartin, *The National Daily Press of France* (Birmingham: Summa Publications, 1998), 70-91; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 135-136, 154-155; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 57-67; Hallin & Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 92, 127-129.

political constellation of the respective country. As a result, a large number of dailies had a well-delineated target audience based on political or religious orientation, which created a much more steady relation between a daily and its public.<sup>43</sup> In the Netherlands this is also reflected in the way the dailies were distributed. The Dutch newspaper business was mainly based on subscriptions. Most readers received their paper through home delivery, whereas in Great Britain and France dailies were mainly sold at newsagents that could be found on virtually every street corner. Scholars have argued that this loyal subscription culture meant that the Dutch dailies had less incentive to change their layout or their newspaper content in general. Papers could count on the stability of their readership and therefore were not competing as much with each other.<sup>44</sup> The strong entwinement of politics and journalism in France and the Netherlands also restricted the dailies in their acquisition of advertisement. The attachment to a particular ideology made the pool of companies and institutions that were interested in advertising in a daily less extensive. The ideological orientation of the press in these countries therefore played an important role in the profitability of the dailies, which could affect the financial viability of a daily. Moreover, the French dailies had a bad reputation with regard to corruptions and bribery, which made advertisers altogether reluctant to use dailies as a means for publicity.<sup>45</sup> In 1892 for instance it got out that journalists - as well as politicians - had been bribed to report positively about the possibility to invest in the excavation of the Panama Canal, while it was known that the entire endeavor was having serious financial difficulties and could hardly be called a solid investment.<sup>46</sup>

From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward, advertisement revenues started to play an increasingly crucial role in competition between the different dailies within one country. This focus on advertising played an important part in the dailies' strategy of dropping their cover price to attract readership. First, the introduction of the so-called cheap 'penny press' caused a revolution on the newspaper market and in the end dailies were even sold for less - half a penny in Britain.<sup>47</sup> When for example *De Telegraaf* was first published in 1893 its cover price was roughly only half of that of *Algemeen Handelsblad*. Moreover, *De Courant*, which had the same publisher as *De Telegraaf* and was compiled from the latter's editorial content was even cheaper. Because of this 'price war', which was most fierce in Great Britain the cover prices eventually became so low that in spite of the considerable expansion of the circulation, sales revenues could hardly cover the production costs.<sup>48</sup> The lower the circulation the more a daily was forced to rely on advertisement revenues. In such cases advertisement revenues could make the difference between profitability and bankruptcy.<sup>49</sup> Yet, this only worked for the serious papers focusing on the affluent societal elite. In their case a relatively low circulation was not directly related to the amount of advertisement revenues.<sup>50</sup>

These differences are supported by the results from the content analysis with regard to share

43 Marcel Broersma, "De hand van Romme. C.P.M. Romme als staatkundig hoofdredacteur van de Volkskrant (1945-1952)," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et. al. (Amsterdam: AUP, 2005), 51-52; Hallin & Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 151-158; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 46-47.

44 Maarten Rooij, *Het dagbladbedrijf in Nederland. Een economisch-sociaal beeld* (Leiden: Stenfert Kroese N.V., 1956), 67, 153; Lee, *Popular Press*, 64-66; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 74; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 32-37.

45 Rooij, *Het dagbladbedrijf*, 157-161; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 57-67; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 154-157; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 320-321; cf. Homme Wedman, "Het Panama-schandaal (1889-1893)," *Tijdschrift voor Mediageschiedenis* 10, no.2 (2007): 15-19.

46 Wedman, "Panama-schandaal," 8.

47 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 112; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 138; Wolf, *Geheim van De Telegraaf*, 24-25; comparing prices between the countries is very difficult as the contemporary value of the different currencies at the time differed from the current ones, which also affects the value ratio between them.

48 The fact that the price war was more fierce in Britain might explain the lower number of newspapers in this period in comparison to the Netherlands and France.

49 Van Vree, "Massapers," 99; Curran, "Agency of social control," 69-70.

50 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 9, 140; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 31-33; cf. Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 173.

of the newspaper was devoted to advertisement. Still, these figures only give an indication, for they do not show how much revenue was generated as prices for advertisement differed between dailies. For instance, based on their esteem and their affluent readership the serious press could ask much more for an advertisement than the popular dailies, making their advertisement much more profitable.<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless, in general the amount of advertisement within a paper is an important indicator of its profitability. Graph 4.1 divulges the total amount of advertisement of the different newspapers (as mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, all the graphs and tables presented in this thesis are based on the results of my content analysis). The graph shows that the French dailies clearly attracted the least amount of advertisement. Next to the already discussed partisan nature of the press and its venality that made dailies less attractive to advertisers, France also had a less commercialized and less consumer-oriented society with fewer large scale companies that were interested to spend money on advertising. Thus, a large part of the advertisement revenues was lost to the French dailies.<sup>52</sup> For example, only 13% of the total income of *Le Petit Parisien* during the pre-war period was accounted for by advertisement revenue.<sup>53</sup> This fits the general consensus that the British dailies were the most profitable in this period, because of the large advertisement revenues they pocketed.<sup>54</sup> The Dutch press also profited from advertisement revenue, but to a lesser extent and on a much smaller scale.<sup>55</sup> This should not lead to the conclusion however that the French newspaper business could not be profitable. The circulation of several dailies for instance was among the highest of the world. In spite of the lower advertisement revenues *Le Petit Parisien* for instance was a highly lucrative business with a yearly profit between two and five million francs.<sup>56</sup>

Looking at the absolute amount, *The Times* at least contains three times more advertisement than any other of the dailies in this period. This suggests that advertisers were not solely attracted by the circulation of a daily, but also by its cultural authority and its target audience - *The Times* was read by a well-off elite.<sup>57</sup> The share of advertisement in a newspaper (Graph 4.2) also sheds light on the degree of commercialization of the newspaper business. It is clear that the British papers, which devote roughly 50% of their space to advertisement, have the strongest commercial focus, whereas advertisement plays only a marginal role in their French counterparts (10%).

51 Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 171-174; Rooij, *Het dagbladbedrijf*, 157-159, 496-497.

52 Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 255-257; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 82-83.

53 Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 320-322.

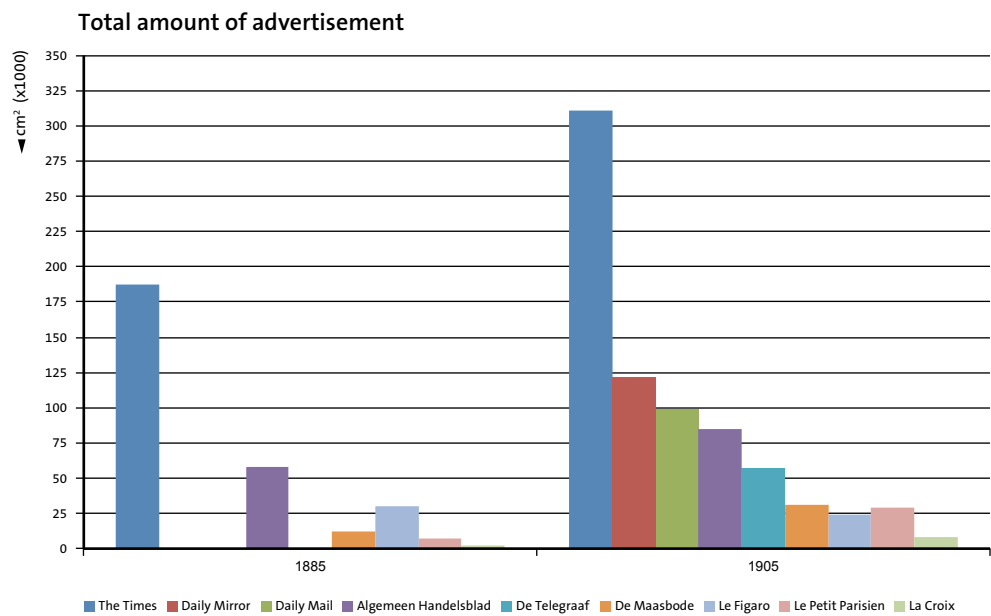
54 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 140; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 320-322.

55 Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 18-20.

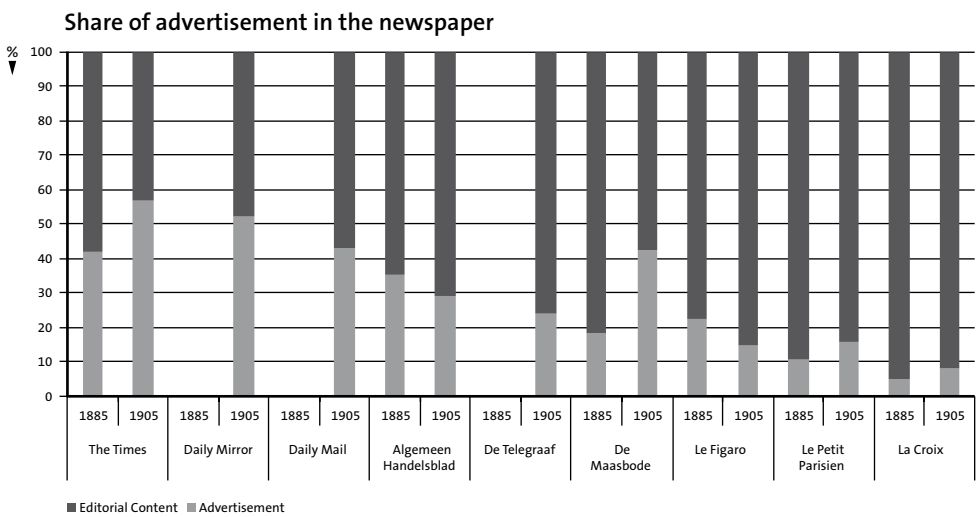
56 Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 320; Francine Amaury, *Histoire du plus grand quotidien de la IIIe république. Le Petit Parisien 1876-1944* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1972), 467; The profit would roughly be between seven and 17 million Euros nowadays, cf. [www.insee.fr/fr/themes/indicateur.asp?id=29&type=1&page=achatfranc.htm](http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/indicateur.asp?id=29&type=1&page=achatfranc.htm).

57 Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 148.

Graph 4.1



Graph 4.2



The amount of advertisement seems to have had an influence on the size of the dailies. A rule of thumb in the (commercialized) newspaper business is that every page of editorial content is considered to be the reverse side of an advertisement page. With that rule in mind, more advertisement would mean more editorial content. Looking at the size of the dailies (Table 4a) in 1885 and 1905 this expectation is confirmed. Roughly corresponding to the differences in advertisement there are large differences in the size of the dailies between the three countries as well. *The Times* is by far the largest daily, but

in general the British dailies prove to have the most pages. Yet, the *Daily Mirror* was published on a smaller tabloid format.<sup>58</sup> In 1905 the Dutch dailies had almost caught up with the British dailies in this respect. The French dailies offer the largest contrast with their British and Dutch counterparts with generally 4 or 6 pages- only *Le Figaro* occasionally had 8 pages. This difference is reinforced by the fact that in the first years of the research period *Le Petit Parisien* and *La Croix* had a much more compact page size; a heritage of the period in which stamp duties were calculated based on size.<sup>59</sup> They do however display a modest growth over the years. Generally, the newspapers are getting larger, with *The Times* clearly being the frontrunner when it comes to size.

Table 4a

Number of pages		1885	1905
<b>Great Britain</b>	The Times	12-16	16-20
	Daily Mirror	-	16**
	Daily Mail	-	8-10
<b>The Netherlands</b>	Algemeen Handelsblad	4-8	10-12
	De Telegraaf	-	6-8
	De Maasbode	4	6-8
<b>France</b>	Le Figaro	4-8	6-8
	Le Petit Parisien	4*	6
	La Croix	4**	4

\* published on *Berliner* format \*\* published on *Tabloid* format

Still, an increase in the number of pages did not necessarily mean an increase in of the editorial content. The way the growth in the number of pages of the dailies is related to their advertisement-content ratio supports the idea that an increase in the number of pages in the first place means more advertisement and results in a relatively small growth in editorial content.<sup>60</sup> This idea is supported by the development of the newshole of the respective dailies. Looking at the size of the editorial content (Graph 4.3) shows that the distinction between French newspapers on the one side and British and Dutch on the other also applies in this case, but the differences are not as strong. *The Times* remains the daily with the largest newshole in this period. However, by 1905 the Dutch dailies have a similar newshole size, and the French are not far behind. The increase in size thus seems to be first and foremost commercially driven, and cannot be ascribed solely or maybe even primarily to an increasing demand for and focus on news, as Chalaby has suggested. Moreover, his claim that the French dailies contained much less information than their British counterparts due to their small number of pages should be nuanced as well.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Newspapers could be published on roughly three different page formats: broadsheet (approximately 59 x 42 cm), Berliner (approximately 47 x 32 cm) and tabloid format (approximately 42 x 30 cm). Most newspapers were up until the 1960s mostly published on broadsheet format. If this is otherwise I will mention this in the specific cases.

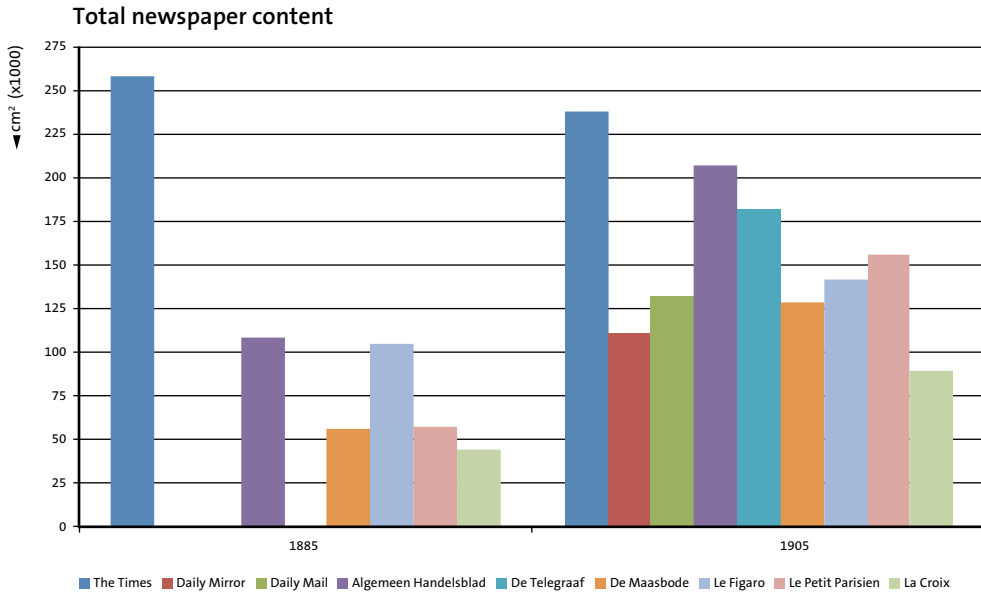
<sup>59</sup> Cf. Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 84-85; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 47.

<sup>60</sup> Rooij, *Het dagbladbedrijf*, 168-169.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 305-310.



Graph 4.3



So all in all, these results reinforce the idea that Britain was ahead of the other countries concerning the commercialization and size of the newspaper. Still, the differences should not be exaggerated. Especially the Dutch press developed quickly between 1880 and 1914, and with regard to advertisement and size, the gap with the British dailies diminished in this respect. Due to the later acquired press freedom and (ongoing) state control, and the political parallelism the French press was less commercialized and the dailies therefore remained smaller. However, as I have argued in the introduction of this chapter, the development of the newspaper as a business should not be conflated with the discursive development of journalism, which is a much more complex process.<sup>62</sup>

## The revolution of ‘new journalism’?

Press histories about all three countries argue that the innovation and expansion of the press markets in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century went hand in hand with a changing dynamics within journalism practice, affecting the norms, routines and textual conventions. The period can be characterized by the start of a struggle between the already established dailies and several ambitious newcomers. In all the three countries the established newspapers, like *The Times*, *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *Le Figaro* had throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century gradually developed into respectable institutions, but also into solid and profitable businesses.<sup>63</sup>

The profitability of these papers was for an important part the result of their relatively high cover price, which remained relatively high even after the rise of the ‘penny’ press. *The Times* was reluctant to drop its cover price to a penny and *Le Figaro* kept its price at 15 *centimes* up until 1911, whereas

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 306–307, 320–322; Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 1–2.

<sup>63</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 99–101, 106; Willem Visser, *De Papieren Spiegel. Honderd-vijf-en-twintig jaar Algemeen Handelsblad. 1828–1953* (Amsterdam: Jacob van Kampen, 1953), 220–221; Eveno, *L’argent de la presse*, 30–31.

cheaper dailies were sold at 5 *centimes* per paper.<sup>64</sup> The sales revenues were complemented with advertisement revenues, although in France this accounted for a lesser share of the returns than in Britain and the Netherlands.

These dailies determined the quality standards of journalism and had a strong authoritative position within society. *The Times* for instance was widely considered to be Britain's leading newspaper. It consisted of meticulous reports of political debates and speeches, court proceedings and shareholders meetings, many small news reports on the world events. The heart of the newspaper was devoted to reflection of esteemed politicians and officials, scholars or literary authors. The paper was envied for its large network of correspondents all over the world and its privileged position with the social elite.<sup>65</sup> However, precisely this also put a strain on the profitability of the paper, especially when the competition got stronger. The content of the daily was focused on an elite, and thus inherently limited, audience, and its large network of reporters and correspondents was very costly.<sup>66</sup> Still, scholars have pointed to the appeal of the authoritative position of *The Times* and the affluence of its readership that kept on attracting many advertisers and drove up the price of their advertisement space.<sup>67</sup>

With the institutional changes at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several new dailies, like the *Daily Mail* (1896), the *Daily Mirror* (1903), *De Telegraaf* (1893), and *Le Petit Parisien* (1878), were founded that seriously threatened the leading position of the journalistic establishment. Before the emergence of these newcomers, the circulation number of most of the authoritative established dailies in France and Britain floated around 50,000 copies a day, *Le Figaro* being an exception with 100,000 copies around the 1880s. In the Netherlands, with its much smaller sized press market, *Algemeen Handelsblad* was leading with a circulation of 5400 in 1850. After their emergence *Le Petit Parisien*, the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Mail*, and *De Telegraaf* grew rapidly and quickly acquired large circulations. Around 1900 *Le Petit Parisien* had with 800,000 copies the largest circulation of these dailies, followed by the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Mail* with respectively 300,000 and 400,000 papers a day.<sup>68</sup> Somewhat more modest was the circulation of *De Telegraaf*, but with 25,000 copies it was still way ahead of its competition.<sup>69</sup> These numbers kept on growing and right before the First World War *Le Petit Parisien* had the highest circulation in the world with approximately 1,400,000 copies.<sup>70</sup> With three other prominent and successful dailies of the *presse d'information*, *Le Petit Journal*, *Le Journal*, and *Le Matin*, it dominated the press market. In common parlance these four dailies were known as *les quatre grands*, for their combined circulation accounted for 75% of the entire circulation of the Parisian dailies. In Britain the circulation had also kept on growing, but with respectively 800,000 and 700,000 just before the war the circulation of the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Mail* was considerably more modest.<sup>71</sup>

The success of these 'popular' papers, as they have been coined because of their broad appeal, drew a bill on the established papers. In Britain, *The Times* had lost momentum, and started to decline with a circulation of 49,000 in 1883 even dropping down to 32,000 in 1904. Only after the paper was bought by Lord Northcliffe in 1908 and its cover price dropped to a penny, its position improved somewhat.<sup>72</sup>

64 Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 113; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 138; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 84-85; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 28.

65 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 81-85, 103.

66 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 109.

67 William, *Read All About It!*, 106.

68 Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 101; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 130, 133.

69 Wolff, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 122.

70 Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 156.

71 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 126-133.

72 Startt, "Good Journalism," 282-283.

The circulation of *Le Figaro* shows a similar pattern. After its peak of 100,000 copies a day in the years following the establishment of the press freedom its circulation dropped considerably to 37,000 in 1910. The Netherlands forms an exception in this respect as the circulation of the established dailies kept on growing as well.<sup>73</sup> This can be explained by the pillarized press landscape, as it was almost a 'must' for the people following a certain ideology to read the matching daily.<sup>74</sup>

Based on the existing scholarship, it is safe to say that in the period from the 1890s up until the First World War the development of the press market in all three countries was for an important part characterized by the rise of the popular press and its struggle for dominance with the established dailies. However, the serious press still determined the quality standards within journalism and these dailies were reluctant to adopt the new approach with which the new contenders positioned themselves in the journalistic domain. The dynamics of this struggle between tradition and innovation within the encompassing framework of a rapidly changing press landscape and society in general, shaped the discursive development of journalism in this period.

In all three countries press historians have portrayed the 1880s and 1890s as a period characterized by the rise of a novel journalism practice. In this period journalism supposedly transformed into a profession with the hunt for news at the heart of its practice; the news paradigm emerged.<sup>75</sup> Facilitated by the evolving institutional and commercial circumstances I have just discussed, journalism practice was started to change. The umbrella term 'new journalism' that most scholars use in this context refers to a whole gamut of discursive changes.<sup>76</sup> As the infrastructural organization of the West and the technology of telecommunications improved, the world events were covered more rapidly than ever and a 24-hour news cycle emerged.<sup>77</sup> As several scholars have argued, in this period the selection of newspaper content came to be based on news values, like immediacy and proximity, instead of being the result of ideological considerations. To attract readership dailies, especially the popular ones, devoted less space to the traditional 'hard news' topics, like politics, foreign affairs and business news, and supplemented them with coverage of more appealing and compelling topics, like crime, accidents, sports, human interest, and lifestyle. Together with these topical changes the presentation and lay-out of the papers is said to have also become much livelier. Bold headings and subheadings attracted the eyes of the readers to the articles, and guided them through the editorial content. Finally, many scholars have pointed to the emergence of reporting and interviewing as the new dominant routines. They have connected these routines to the rise of journalism as an independent and objective practice that according to them came to determine journalism discourse in this period.<sup>78</sup>

Many scholars have depicted these changes as smooth shift from a traditional reflective journalism to a fact-centered reporting practice with the established dailies focusing on the public interest and the new popular dailies following the public's interests. The existing scholarship portrays Great Britain as the frontrunner in this development, setting the standard for continental Europe, which reluctantly followed suit.<sup>79</sup> However, my analysis suggests that in reality the development of journalism in the three countries was not as clear-cut and the diffusion of the new norms, routines,

<sup>73</sup> Van de Plasse & Verbeij, *Kroniek*, 192-193.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 83.

<sup>75</sup> Wiener, "How New," 50; Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 10-14; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 94-95, 101-104; Wijffjes, "Modernization of Style," 62; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 1-2.

<sup>76</sup> Wiener, "How New," 50.

<sup>77</sup> Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 10-14; Wiener, "'Get the News!,'" 48-66.

<sup>78</sup> Wiener, "How New," 50-58; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 127-140; Wijffjes, "Modernization of Style," 62, 71-75; Martin, *Grands reporters*, 15-23.

<sup>79</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 304-313; Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 15; For a more nuanced perspective, cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvii-xix; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 4-7.

and forms not as unidirectional nor as unequivocal. Journalistic development in Europe in this period was a complex and much more gradual process.

French newspapers for instance did not uniformly reject the new norms and routines as Chalaby has suggested.<sup>80</sup> On the contrary, the popular papers in France were among the first, which adopted - but also adapted - certain elements of this novel journalism practice.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, Hampton has shown how reflective journalism, or the 'educational' ideal in his terms, kept on playing a role in British journalism discourse alongside a 'representative' ideal for a much longer period than the grand narrative suggest. The representative ideal is similar to as event-centered journalism, but did not necessarily mean just presenting the facts. It still entailed an ideological perspective on the world. However, Hampton shows that the approach to the public had changed. The optimistic outlook on the public as engaged citizens gave way to a more pessimistic perspective, in which the readership was not considered to be that concerned with democratic society. Instead of providing the public with information to make their own rational decisions, the dailies therefore made these decisions by speaking on their behalf. Besides that, he - and other scholars for that matter - also argues that the adoption of a more commercial rationale did not mean a 180 degrees shift to content solely focused on entertainment by following the interests and preferences of the mass public.<sup>82</sup> Startt's following quote from his research into new journalism reinforces this idea:

Serious political news and commentary were by no means absent from the best of these [popular, FH] papers. Many people today would be surprised at the amount of space devoted to such matters in such newspapers.<sup>83</sup>

His argument about the remaining reflective elements finds support in my analysis of the dailies, which suggests that throughout the entire first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century most dailies were still coming to terms with the changes and did not fully embrace the conventions of both types of event-centered journalism.

Because of the liberalization and expansion of the press market and the many successful attempts of journalistic entrepreneurs to set up a newspaper business, the period from roughly 1880 up to the start of the First World War is generally acknowledged by press historians as what the French have termed *l'âge d'or* of the press.<sup>84</sup> Besides the industrious character of this period, this predicate also refers to the idea that in this period journalism professionalized with its own agenda of issues and themes and with its own discursive forms. Yet, based on my analysis of the editorial content, I argue that the term *l'âge d'or* applies more to the institutional and commercial development, and to the increasing debate on journalism rather than that it appropriately refers to an actual sweeping transformation of the actual everyday practice. Up until the First World War, the discursive developments in that sense were much more modest, and are best characterized by their tentative character and probing nature. Journalists were debating their role in society and the standards of their practice, which translated only very gradually into a commonly shared practice.

<sup>80</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 311-313.

<sup>81</sup> Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 4; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 94.

<sup>82</sup> Hampton, "Understanding media," 215-225; Tulloch, "Eternal Recurrence," 131-146; Startt, "Good Journalism," 294.

<sup>83</sup> Startt, "Good Journalism," 294.

<sup>84</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 83; Jeanneney, *Histoire des médias*, 99; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 72; Hampton, "Understanding media," 218.

## Fierce debates, gradual changes

With the increasing size and circulation of the newspapers more journalists were necessary to fill the newshole. Also, more hands were needed on the side of the physical production of the newspapers. Because the increasing size and circulation often went hand in hand with increasing advertisement and sales revenues, successful dailies had the money to expand their editorial and supporting staff. Prior research has shown that, again, the British dailies showed the strongest expansion in this respect, and had the largest networks of reporters and correspondents working for them.<sup>85</sup> This was accompanied by a growing specialization of journalists and by an increasing division of labor. The reporters wrote their initial stories, which would then go through an editing process to create uniformity in the newspaper. This growing division of labor manifested itself first and foremost in Britain.<sup>86</sup> However, the growing professionalization of the editing process should not be regarded as an inevitable rise of the objectivity regime.<sup>87</sup>

In France the number of journalists and correspondents employed by the dailies also grew considerably, but not on the same scale as the British (and American) dailies. Their network of permanent correspondents remained much more limited than in those countries.<sup>88</sup> The same goes for the Dutch papers. The fear of fluctuation in advertisement revenue and the costly production process curtailed the size of the editorial staff. In the Netherlands this prevented a process of specialization to really take off, which would last until after the First World War when the Dutch dailies started to expand their editorial staff structurally.<sup>89</sup> In both countries the smaller scale of the editorial staff of most dailies thwarted the division of labor within the newsroom. Furthermore, the orientation on literary discourse, which I will discuss more in detail further on in this chapter, also contributed to a stronger autonomy of the reporter with regard to his or her articles.<sup>90</sup>

Nevertheless, my research supports the claim that in all three countries journalists started gathering information about specific news fields or 'beats', which were determined by their news value. The traditional focus on parliamentary reports, foreign affairs coverage and financial news expanded towards a broader selection of topics that were considered newsworthy. This development was related to the extensive new societal groups of readership that had emerged, offering a highly interesting commercial opportunity for the dailies. Attracting a new audience from different walks of life than the usual societal elite meant catering to the differing needs and interests of these people. This changing orientation is believed to be intricately related to the rise of (on-site) reporting in which journalists actively sought out news instead of their usual desk-bound reflections. Together these developments resulted in more attention devoted to everyday topics like car accidents, or fires, but also sports became a selling point. Furthermore, this new group of readers liked to virtually rub shoulders with the elite by reading about them, and with the increasing general prosperity and spare time they were interested in consumer goods and leisure activities.<sup>91</sup>

It was first and foremost the popular newspapers that advertised such a novel journalistic approach to the world. Lord Northcliffe for instance told his editor: "We must not let politics dominate

<sup>85</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 146-148; François Naud, *Profession reporter*, 20; Cf. Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 43-44.

<sup>86</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 146-147; Wiener, "How New," 58.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Schudson & Anderson, "Objectivity, Professionalism," 88-89, 93.

<sup>88</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 122; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 157; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 99-100; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 20.

<sup>89</sup> Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 158-159; Gerard Mulder, "De redigerende hand. Stijl en ordening in de schrijvende journalistiek," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et al. (Amsterdam: AUP, 2005), 143-144.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 159; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 71-74, 107-116; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 115, 120-123.

<sup>91</sup> Wiener, "How New," 54-55; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 141-144; Lee, *Popular Press*, 125; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 47; Vree, "Massapers," 99-100; Mariëtte Wolff, "An Anglo-American Newspaper in Holland. Form and Style of *De Telegraaf*," in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 87-90; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 101-104; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 21-22.

the paper."<sup>92</sup> What Northcliffe above everything else wanted to change was the tradition of the endless verbatim parliamentary reports, which often took up pages of the newspaper. Northcliffe advocated a more light-hearted and readable newspaper, which clearly aimed for a readership with different tastes and less time to devote to reading the paper and reflecting on what they read.<sup>93</sup> As the old editor-in-chief of the *Daily Mirror*, Hamilton Fyfe writes in his biography of Northcliffe:

The number of men who now travel to and fro, between suburban homes and offices, out in the morning, back at night, has been growing since the growth of cities. Farther and farther out the small householders must go. [...] These travellers (sic) want something to read in the morning, something of a lighter, more diverting character than the news which the old-established pages contain. The new daily gives them exactly what they require. It amuses them, they can get through it during their journey, they are satisfied they have got all the news of the day. And men take it home in the evening so that their wives can glance over it and read the serial story.<sup>94</sup>

This novel approach is illustrated by the caption in the right upper corner of the *Daily Mail*, which said 'A busy man's paper'.<sup>95</sup>

These ideas about what a newspaper should consist of and look like, led to fierce debates about the quality of journalism, in which the popular dailies were generally seen as the inversion of the 'serious' press that set the quality standard. Focusing on the public's interests was not the same as guarding the public interest and the commercial rationale of these dailies was considered to be at odds with journalism's democratic function.<sup>96</sup> It is often seen as a precursor of the contemporary debate about tabloidization of journalism.<sup>97</sup> Although there are certainly parallels, such comparisons have to be made cautiously as popular journalism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was still very much inscribed to the democratic function of journalism.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, presenting the serious and the popular press as complete opposites can take the attention away from the interaction between the popular and serious dailies.

Although, they might have distanced themselves from each other for strategic reasons, my following analysis shows that on a discursive level they kept close track of each other. They freely adopted and adapted norms, routines, and forms from each other if they thought they could profit from it. In their continuous act of balancing cultural authority and commercial success the serious and popular dailies together determined the bandwidth of the accepted discursive practices. With regard to the introduction of the new event-centered journalism this interaction is particularly interesting. The popular dailies were the first to flirt with this new outlook on journalism. The serious press was much more conservative in this respect and chided their popular counterparts for adopting this novel approach.<sup>99</sup> However, in the long run they could not ignore its success and gradually incorporated the new standards in their conception of 'quality' journalism. Throughout this thesis I will demonstrate that this is a recurring mechanism: new discursive practices that are introduced by the popular press are subsequently made *salonfähig* by the serious press.

<sup>92</sup> Lord Northcliffe cited in: Jean Chalaby, "'Smiling Pictures Make People Smile': Northcliffe's journalism," *Media History* 6, no.1 (2000): 35.

<sup>93</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 159.

<sup>94</sup> Hamilton Fyfe, *Northcliffe, an Intimate Biography* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1930), 64-65.

<sup>95</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 129.

<sup>96</sup> Wiener, "How New," 47-49; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 120; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 42-47; Wolf, "Anglo-American Newspaper," 81-82, 87-88; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 35-42; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 94-95.

<sup>97</sup> Sparks, "Introduction," 17-18.

<sup>98</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 142; Startt, "Good Journalism," 294.

<sup>99</sup> Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 56-63; Brake, "Old Journalism," 12-22; Startt, "Good Journalism," 276-283.

## Expanding the topical horizon

In the period up until the war the interdependence between the serious and popular press manifested itself clearly in the development of the topical orientation of the dailies. The results of the content analysis shows that, in general, the changes in topical orientation and focus were still rather modest with the British popular dailies showing the clearest changes (see graph 4.4). This suggests that the emergence of the distinction between fact-centered information and story journalism was in part the result of a successful rhetorical strategy by both the critics of the popular press as well as the owners and editors of these dailies. In reality, the news agenda was expanded rather than fundamentally transformed. In all dailies the traditional themes like national politics, international relations, and economic and financial news were still at the center of attention - despite statements of press barons such as Lord Northcliffe saying otherwise.<sup>100</sup>

Thus, from a discursive perspective the divergence between the popular dailies and the others can be discerned in the topical orientation of the dailies, but as Williams argues for the British press, "[It] did not end serious high-brow, political journalism - but it did lay down the foundations for the division of the British press between 'serious' and 'popular' newspapers."<sup>101</sup> It can therefore best be considered as a development towards a more pluriform content instead of a fundamentally altered journalistic focus.<sup>102</sup>

The analysis of the topical focus of the different dailies also suggests that the way the dailies dealt with this new public and the changing circumstances differed within and between cultures. The different conceptions of journalism that Broersma discerns can to a certain extent be recognized within the dailies in the different countries. The quantitative analysis of the topical orientation cannot fully take into account the particular way the information is presented, which makes it necessary to interpret the results with caution. In this early period of their development these conceptions had not crystallized yet and in many cases the dailies subsequently seem to have fused characteristics of these different notions of what journalism practice should entail.<sup>103</sup> This emphasizes the ideal-typical nature of Broersma's categorization. The three ideal-types should be used primarily as sensitizing concepts to tease out the different elements of the journalistic conception dailies have championed throughout history.<sup>104</sup>

The results indicate that the national idiosyncrasies had an important influence on the way journalism practice developed. In Britain the differences between the dailies are the strongest (Graph 4.4). *The Times* shows a traditional focus in the period before World War I and around 60% of its editorial content was devoted to politics and economy. It was famous for its long verbatim reports of political debates and speeches and to a lesser extent for its extensive reports of shareholders meetings and stock exchange figures.<sup>105</sup> It devotes some attention to human interest, lifestyle and sports, but these topics only play a marginal role in the editorial content. These results indicate that *The Times*, like many of the other dailies that were long established in this period, did not change much in its editorial focus to attract the newly emerged readership.

<sup>100</sup> Harry Schalck, "Fleet Street in the 1880s: The New Journalism," in *Papers for the Millions. The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914*, ed. Joel Wiener (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 75.

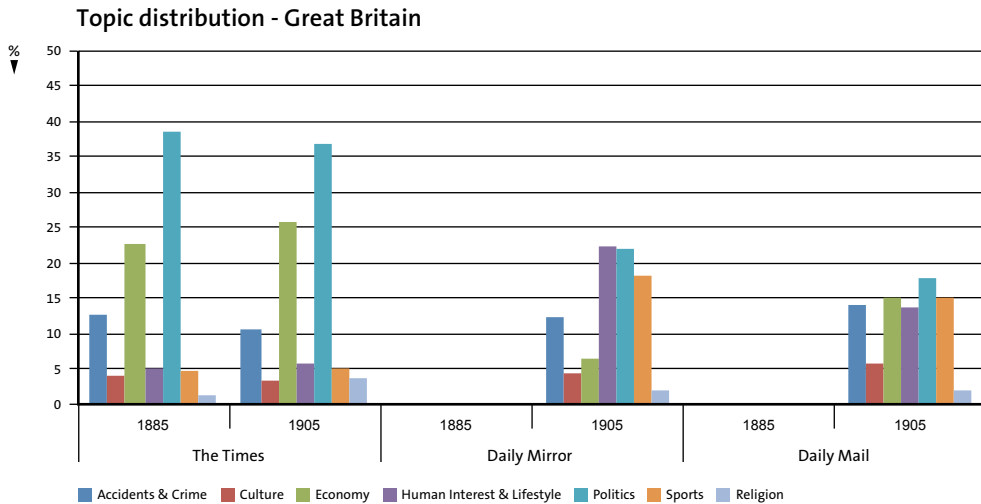
<sup>101</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 148.

<sup>102</sup> Startt, "Good Journalism," 275-279; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 23.

<sup>103</sup> Hampton, "Understanding media," 215.

<sup>104</sup> Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 24.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Wiener, "How New," 51; Matheson, "Birth of news discourse," 562-563.

Graph 4.4<sup>106</sup>

The *Daily Mirror* and, to a slightly lesser extent, the *Daily Mail* attest to a changing focus within journalism in this period. Next to politics, and also economy in the case of the *Mail*, the papers devoted most attention to sports and human interest. They also published serials in their dailies to tie their readership to the paper.<sup>107</sup> Especially, the *Daily Mirror* spent much attention on human interest and lifestyle, which reflects the difference between the mid-market *Daily Mail* and the more down-market *Mirror* with regard to their target audience. Yet, this focus can also partially be explained by the specific character of the daily, which, after its short-lived adventure as a ‘women’s newspaper’, was re-launched in 1904 as a picture paper.<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, although the traditional dominance of politics clearly had diminished, it still remained one of the leading topics in both popular dailies with a share of roughly 20%.<sup>109</sup> Thus the claims of the press lords that politics had lost its prominence, should be nuanced and needs to be seen in the light of their strategic positioning within the journalistic domain as politics remained one of the most important topics within the popular dailies.

This does not mean that the serious and popular press also treated politics similarly, for this cannot be gathered from these results. Previous research has shown that the popular dailies adopted a less intellectual approach to politics that catered to the feelings of the mass public. For instance, both the *Mail* and the *Mirror* frequently launched a campaign to demand social reform as a means to attract readers.<sup>110</sup> Although such an approach necessarily means that these dailies chose a political side, most scholars agree that this choice was commercially driven rather than ideologically motivated. The popular dailies were quite opportunistic in this respect and did not

<sup>106</sup> These topics presented in these graphs are not exhaustive, but represent the most important topics in the dailies.

<sup>107</sup> In the content analysis fiction is a genre category, which automatically got the label ‘no topic’, which is why it cannot be presented in the topic graphs. The share of the serials took up roughly between 5 and 10% of the dailies in 1905, cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 129.

<sup>108</sup> Chris Horrie, *Tabloid Nation. From the Birth of the Daily Mirror to the Death of the Tabloid* (London: Andre Deutsch, 2003), 18-24.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Schalck, “Fleet Street,” 75; Startt, “Good Journalism,” 277.

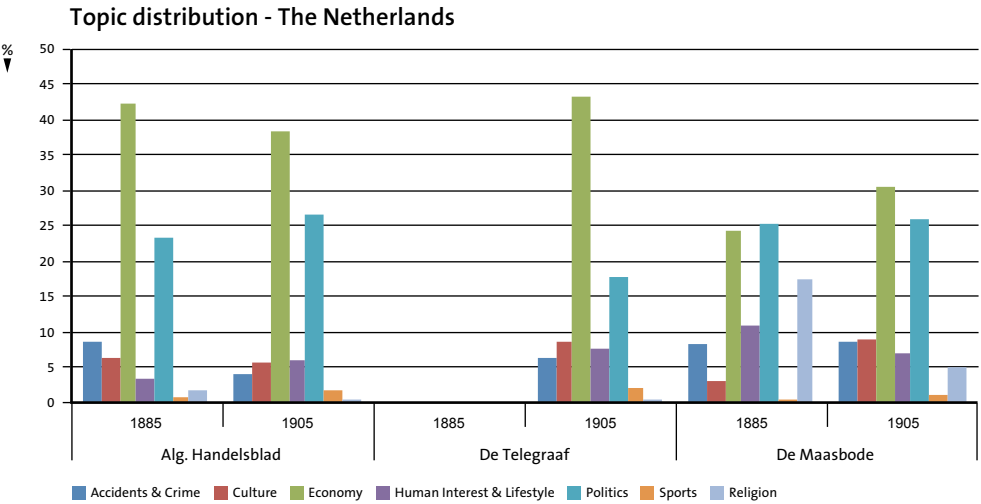
<sup>110</sup> Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 141-144.



consistently champion one particular political perspective.<sup>111</sup> *The Times* as a paper of record also had no official ideological position and advocated its role as fourth estate. Still, the paper was more closely connected to the political domain. Next to an important source for political news, it was also considered a key platform for politicians to convey their views. This close connection to the political establishment was reflected in the general editorial line, which was much closer to the ideas of the politicians in power.<sup>112</sup>

Previous research into British journalism history therefore cast further doubt on the prominence of reflective journalism in Great Britain in this period. It seems that none of the three dailies fit in with the reflective tradition - as was more or less expected beforehand. Nevertheless, the crusadism of the popular dailies and the close relation to the political domain of *The Times* do suggest that the reflective tradition was not replaced as quickly as some scholars have assumed.<sup>113</sup> This idea is reinforced by the complex balancing act of most dailies, as they tried to simultaneously appeal to their readership as well as inform them thoroughly about political reality.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, the idea that reflective elements were not gone entirely in the press is supported by the data, which emphasize the gradual pace of the journalistic developments. Still, more empirical research into the role of reflective elements in the dailies in this period is needed, in which the serious and the popular dailies should be studied as interconnected rather than opposite to each other.

Graph 4.5



In comparison to Britain, the journalistic discourse in the Netherlands seems to have been more uniform in this period (Graph 4.5). Just as the longer established dailies, *De Telegraaf* still had a rather traditional topical orientation focusing on politics and economy - the latter consisting for an important part of long list of stock exchange figures.<sup>115</sup> *De Telegraaf* exceeded its competition in the attention for this topic. In the attention for business and trade the daily reveals its roots as it was

<sup>111</sup> Chalaby, "No Ordinary Press Owners," 623-625.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 105-106.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 139-140; Hampton, "The "objectivity" ideal," 483.

<sup>114</sup> Hampton, "Understanding media," 214-215; Startt, "Good Journalism," 280-281.

<sup>115</sup> De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 62.

partly established to provide better intelligence for the Dutch business people.<sup>116</sup> Human interest had a modest share in the dailies and sports had hardly entered journalistic discourse yet. Only *De Maasbode* devoted in 1885 a considerable share of the newspaper to human interest and lifestyle, which is somewhat surprising given its reputation as a reflective paper. This can be explained however by the considerable attention the paper devotes to short announcements about people's career development or personal fortunes or misfortunes. This kind of information is therefore quite different from the current notion of human interest news as prying into somebody's private lives. Nevertheless, prior research suggests that the publication of this information did emerge from a similar demand for information about important figures within a certain community and added to its internal cohesion.<sup>117</sup>

The attention devoted to religion (almost 20%) suggests that in 1885 *De Maasbode* was still firmly embedded in the tradition of reflective journalism. In 1905, its space for religion had diminished to only 5%, which indicates that the daily was casting off its ideological feathers. However, this conclusion seems too strong as in absolute numbers the attention for religion declined not as strong.<sup>118</sup> Moreover, attention for religion is certainly not the only indicator through which the reflective journalism practice can be determined. Previous research suggests that a clear Catholic perspective was present in most of the editorial content.<sup>119</sup>

Apart from certain slight differences the topical orientation of the Dutch dailies was very similar. These results therefore suggest a rather uniform journalistic discourse in which dailies, next to coverage of national politics and foreign affairs, focused on a readership of business people. In this respect the Dutch dailies are similar to *The Times*, although the focus on business and trade is stronger in the Netherlands. An explanation for this can be found in the fact that dailies in the Netherlands - famous for its mercantilism - had initially developed as a way to inform a professional business elite, which strongly relied on financial information before becoming a platform for political ideas and information.<sup>120</sup> Nevertheless, the Dutch dailies also contained more diverting elements in the paper, like serials.<sup>121</sup> The status of these serial as entertainment is however not entirely clear-cut as it seems to be in the British case. I will discuss this more elaborately within the framework of French journalism.

The French dailies have the most idiosyncratic topical orientation (Graph 4.6). The distinction between the long established serious press and the more light-hearted newcomers is somewhat problematic. Firstly, almost all serious dailies were considered to be part of the *presse d'opinion*, which primary focus was not on news. Furthermore, the typical profile of a narrow focus on politics and business does not entirely apply to the French press. In general economic issues, like business and trade played a smaller role in the French press, although the importance of this topic grew between 1885 and 1905. The topical focus of *La Croix* fits in best with the traditionally narrow focus of the serious press, although its ideological orientation also made religion a core topic of the daily. *Le Figaro*, which was considered to be a more prominent daily within France, has a strong focus on politics as well. Yet this paper also contained popular features, which might be attributed to its origins as

<sup>116</sup> Wolf, *Geheim van De Telegraaf*, 26.

<sup>117</sup> De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 61; Marcel Broersma, "Media en identiteitspolitiek. Ter inleiding," in *Identiteitspolitiek. Media en de constructie van gemeenschapsgoed*, ed. Marcel Broersma & Joop Koopmans (Hilversum: Verloren, 2010). 10.

<sup>118</sup> The coverage of religion went back from roughly 9500 cm<sup>2</sup> to 6500 cm<sup>2</sup>.

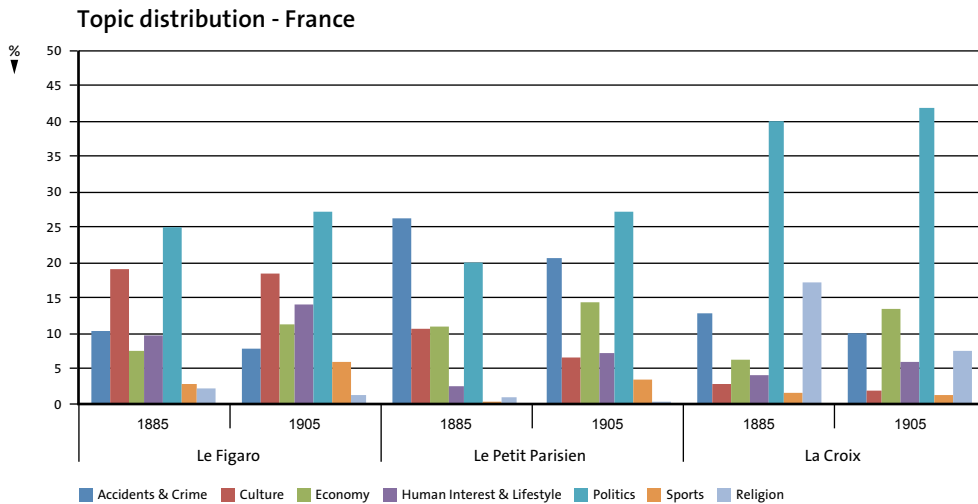
<sup>119</sup> Frank van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers en Duitsland, 1930-1939. Een studie over de vorming van de publieke opinie* (Groningen: Historische Uitgeverij Groningen, 1989), 142-151.

<sup>120</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 13.

<sup>121</sup> An increase can be seen between 1885 and 1905, in which year the dailies in average devoted roughly 8% of the newspaper to serials.

a literary-satirical magazine. The daily showed a strong focus on literary and theater criticism and devoted much attention to human interest by keeping track of the lives of people in high society.<sup>122</sup> The paper spent between 10 and 15% of its editorial content to human interest and lifestyle and almost 20% to culture, mostly literature, theater and visual arts. Furthermore, of all three French papers in 1905, *Le Figaro* spent the most attention to sports.

Graph 4.6



In turn, *Le Petit Parisien*, part of the *presse d'information*, cannot be called a 'typical' popular daily when it comes to its choice of topics. It is mostly its strong focus on accidents and crime that can be linked to the popular profile. Sports, and human interest and lifestyle however remain to play a marginal role between 1885 and the First World War. Between 1885 and 1905 its topical orientation moved even more towards that of the traditional 'serious' press as the attention for economy and politics grew.

The cultural coverage of *Le Figaro* stands out both nationally and internationally. It shows the roots of *Le Figaro* as a literary and satirical paper, which was re-launched as a newspaper in 1854.<sup>123</sup> This can also be seen to a lesser extent in 1885 in *Le Petit Parisien* with roughly 10% of its news-hole devoted to culture. The attention for literature and theatre within the French dailies signals the strong orientation on literature and literary discourse of the French press, which I will discuss more in detail in the last section of this chapter on the reportage.<sup>124</sup> As French press historians have made abundantly clear, many literary authors started their career as journalists. Especially *Le Figaro* is known for the literary big shots that published serialized novels within its ranks. But most newspapers could pride themselves on having launched a literary celebrity.<sup>125</sup>

Another indication of the literary orientation of journalism is the integration of serials in the

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 236-237; Marieke Dubbelboer, "Rewriting the News. Journalism and Literature in Fin-de-siècle France. The Case of Alfred Jarry (1873-1907), in *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News, 1880-2005*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 158-159.

<sup>123</sup> Claire Blandin, *Le Figaro*, 1-2.

<sup>124</sup> Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 19-42; cf. Martin, *Grand reporters*, 21-23.

<sup>125</sup> Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 19-42; cf. Bertrand de Saint Vincent, *Les grands écrivains publiés dans Le Figaro (1836-1941)* (Paris: Acropole, 2011).

dailies. The content analysis shows that in 1885 *Le Petit Parisien* devoted more than 20% of its editorial content to serials in 1885. This had diminished somewhat in 1905 when it accounted for 13% of the content. In *Le Figaro* this share was a bit lower and decreased between 1885 and 1905 from 13% to 4%. Conversely, *La Croix* showed a slight increase from 5% and 8%, comparable to the Dutch dailies and the British popular dailies. *The Times* did not publish any serials in this period, which signals a difference in the status and characteristics of the serial. This difference is supported by the - scarce - secondary information about the status of the genre in the different countries. In Britain dailies saw the publication of serials mainly as a means to attract and maintain readership.<sup>126</sup> It was believed that by offering their readers an ongoing entertaining story the paper kept its appeal a little longer than a few hours after publication when its news was already considered old.<sup>127</sup> Contrary to the French and Dutch dailies, which published serial written by esteemed novelists such as respectively, Honoré de Balzac and Émile Zola, Louis Couperus, serials in the British dailies were left to writers of popular, less esteemed, fiction.<sup>128</sup> According to Fyfe, Northcliffe found it better not to use novelist as serial writers, because they did not provide a 'cliffhanger' at the end of every part. He wanted writers who were trained in writing serials that kept the reader's at the tip of their toes.

He [Northcliffe, FH] founds a Serial Department which supplies fiction to all his publications. He lays his finger on the weakness of serials written by novelists. "They are stories cut up into lengths. They have not the continuous but jerky interests which a story published by instalments (sic) ought to possess. They flow along with unbroken, instead of rising to a climax at the end of each day's chapter, leaving a situation which makes the reader long to know what happens, and then beginning again and working up to a fresh climax on the following day." Serials, he says, must be manufactured. Writers must be trained to produce them.<sup>129</sup>

In British dailies a serial seems not to have been considered as a means to increase a daily's cultural status or authority, but it was rather associated with the light-hearted content that pleased women as the quote by Fyfe on page 97 indicates as well.<sup>130</sup> In France and the Netherlands the publication of serials was certainly not only a commercial strategy. Like in Britain, dailies published popular fiction, but they also hired esteemed or upcoming novelists.<sup>131</sup> This is reinforced by research pointing to their status in the Netherlands, and especially in France as engaged intellectuals. Thus, a daily serial written by esteemed novelists contributed to the high intellectual status of the daily and could gain a paper cultural authority.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 129.

<sup>127</sup> Hamilton Fyfe, *Northcliffe: An Intimate Biography* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1930), 65.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Klaus-Peter Walter, "Statistische Erhebungen und Auswertungen zur Feuilletonroman-Publikation zwischen 1844 und 1912," in *Der französische Feuilletonroman. Die Entstehung der Serienliteratur im Medium der Tageszeitung*, ed. Hans-Jörg Neuschäfer, Dorothee Fritz-El Ahmad & Klaus-Peter Walter (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1986), 22-24; Peter de Voogd, "Victoriaanse seriemoordenaars: de opkomst van de Engelse detective novel in de negentiende eeuw," in *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies* 17 (2005): 26-28.

<sup>129</sup> Fyfe, *Northcliffe*, 65-66.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. Brake, "The old journalism," 55, 59.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Sophie Levie, "Een stukje Gide, een stukje Proust: 'fidéliser le lecteur' in de *Nouvelle Revue Française*," in *Tijdschrift voor tijdschriftstudies* 17 (2005): 52-59; Joan Hemels, "Het feuilleton als fenomeen én fantoom in de Nederlandse journalistiek," in *Tijdschrift voor tijdschriftstudies* 19 (2006): 16-24.

<sup>132</sup> Thogmartin, *The National Daily Press*, 93; Cf. Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 49-56; Dubbelboer, "Rewriting the News," 156-164; Ilja van den Broek, "Imaginable Reality. Realism and Politics in Dutch Literature and Journalism 1860-1910," in *Form and Style in Journalism*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 149-152.

## Modest innovations in lay-out

These changes in topical orientation - as modest as they in some cases were - were accompanied by a changing organization and appearance of the dailies. With the introduction of new topics, the presentation of the editorial content also developed. The lay-out of the dailies reflects how the dailies conceived their readership. Moreover, it points to the way reality was structured and constructed by the dailies.<sup>133</sup>

The dailies in every country generally employed a vertical lay-out, in which the vertical columns on a page were filled one by one, starting left and finishing right. Longer articles often took up multiple columns, but following the vertical layout the first column was filled down to the bottom of the page, after which it continued at the top of the second, and so forth until the end of the article. This tradition had come into being due to restrictions on the typesetting process, but scholars have pointed out that it was also the result of the expectation that the readership would read the paper from start to finish instead of selectively choosing only the articles of his or her particular interest. Such expectations made a structuring rationale that tried to facilitate a rapid overview of the content and attempted to attract and direct the reader's attention gratuitous.<sup>134</sup> Most of the time, this also applied to the headlines above the articles, but sometimes they covered more than one column (see front pages on pages 208-224).

Before the emergence of several new dailies and the rise of a competitive press market, enhancing visual attractiveness and catering to the readership by visually guiding them through the newspaper was no necessity. Furthermore, the stronger focus on reflection instead of news also made it less important for editors to make clear which breaking news was in the paper. This changed when the new dailies were established and papers had to compete for the attention of the public. The popular newspapers were the most progressive in this respect with the French popular press leading the way. These French dailies contained bolder headlines, covering more than one column, and the articles consisted of more subheadings. Also, the editorial content was gradually no longer structured chronologically - with the oldest articles first and the most recent articles in the back of the paper.<sup>135</sup> The dailies slowly started to departmentalize and cluster articles based on their topic. These thematic sections were structured hierarchical with national politics and foreign affairs as the most important sections, therefore appearing first in the dailies. A comparison of the dailies the day after the war had broken out illustrates this nicely (Illustrations 1-3). The headline of the front page of *Le Petit Parisien* covers the whole page, whereas the main headlines of the front page of *De Telegraaf* and in the example from the *Mail* the headlines only cover two columns.

Thus, my analysis suggests that the innovation of the British popular papers like the *Mail* should not be exaggerated, especially not because many British dailies were reluctant to put editorial content on their front page. Whereas in the Netherlands and France the front page would gradually grow out to become the signature page of the paper, through which it attracted the reader's attention and could showcase itself, the British dailies kept on publishing only advertising on this page.<sup>136</sup> Traditionally, British dailies were organized around a leader page consisting of the most important editorials, opinion pieces and news analyses, which formed the heart of the paper.<sup>137</sup> Over time such

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Wiener, "How New," 50; Broersma, "Visual Strategies. Dutch Newspaper Design between Text and Image 1900-2000," in *Form and Style in Journalism*, ed. Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 179; Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 3.

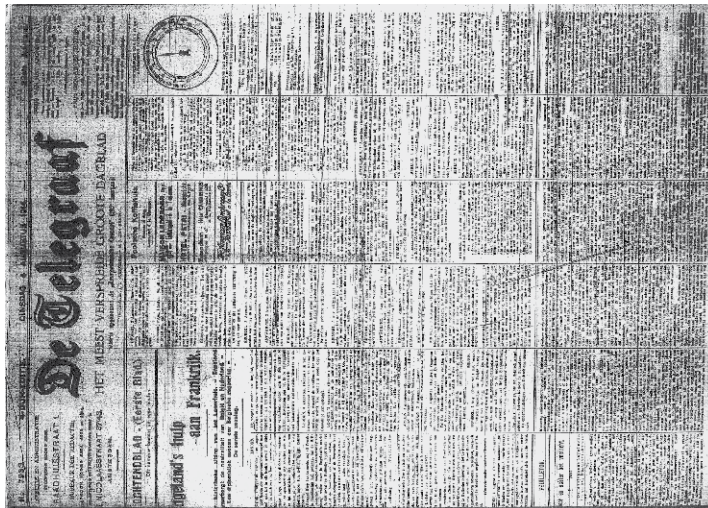
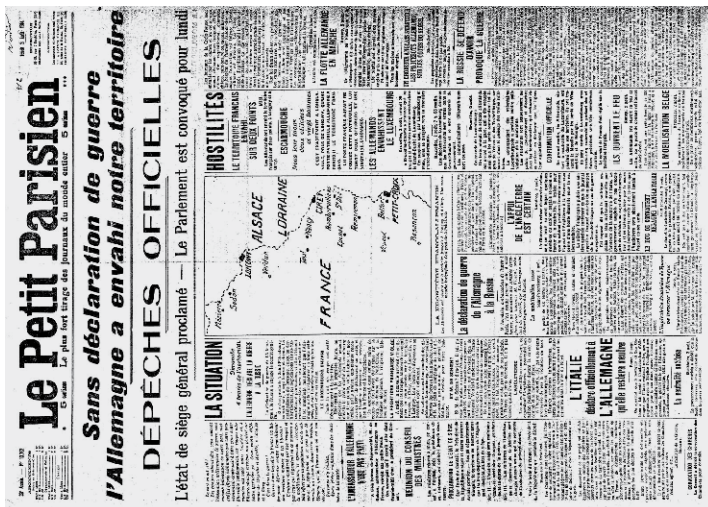
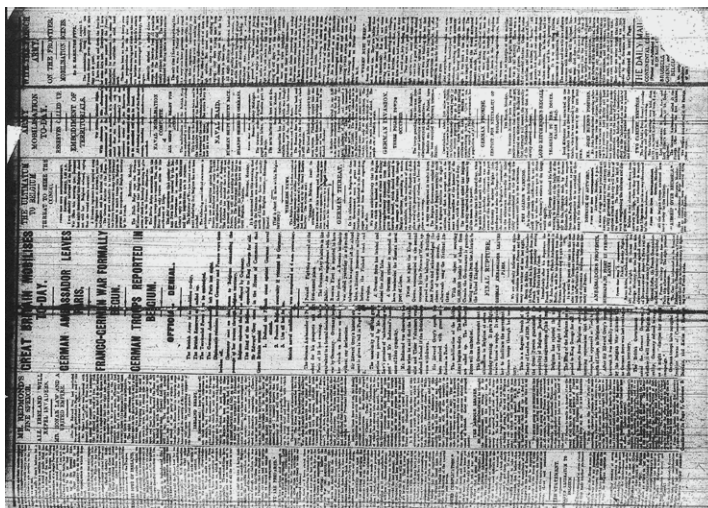
<sup>134</sup> Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 179-180; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 144-145.

<sup>135</sup> Wijffes, "Modernization of Style," 62.

<sup>136</sup> Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 183; Wiener, "How New," 50-52; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 129.

<sup>137</sup> Wiener, "How New," 51.

[Illustrations 1-3: August 3, the day after World War I had broken out]





a structure and lay-out had come to signal a certain accepted quality standard. Deviating from it could raise suspicion about the quality of the content and motives of the people involved. A newly established daily thus in part determined its - initial - reputation in part by its lay-out. As Startt has argued about the *Daily Mail*:

In the process he [Lord Northcliffe, FH] forged that paper into a publication that combined many attractive features of popular journalism and more of the vestiges of a quality press than one might suppose.<sup>138</sup>

He also points to the fact that the *Mail* did not publish any news on its front page. Although other popular dailies, like the *Daily Express*, did start to publish editorial content on the front page, it was still uncommon in the period before the First World War. In the inter-war period this started to change, but nonetheless the mid-market *Daily Mail* kept its front page free of editorial content until 1939 and *The Times* even waited until 1966.<sup>139</sup> In part this lack of an eye-catching front page was partially infused by commercial considerations as the ads on the front page were the most lucrative.<sup>140</sup> Still, this was not the only reason. Scholars have convincingly argued that news on the front page was also considered to express a lack of journalistic quality. Although this feature has not received much attention it points to the gradual tempo of certain discursive changes in Britain.<sup>141</sup> From that perspective the innovative attitude of the British dailies should be nuanced a little.

Another novel strategy of making the paper attractive to readers was the integration of photographs within the ranks of the daily. With regard to the use of photos the serious dailies were quite reluctant. *The Times* and *Algemeen Handelsblad* only integrated an occasional graph, but did not publish pictures on a regular basis. *La Croix* at times did publish a portrait photo, but relied mostly on drawn images, and *Le Figaro* solely contained political cartoons. The Dutch *Maasbode* however takes the cake and contained no images at all in these two sample years. In concordance with earlier inquiries, my analysis shows that the popular dailies first exploited these new visual opportunities.<sup>142</sup> As the only 'picture paper', the *Mirror* was the obvious frontrunner in this respect, devoting more than one third of its newshole to photos. Still, the *Mail* and *Le Petit Parisien* also integrated photos on a regular basis. At first the portrait predominated in this time period, which can explain the focus on celebrities. A tentative explanation is that politicians were not yet as approachable as they currently are and they were therefore not as willing to pose for the camera, whereas for celebrities it was part of the job.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, the technology mainly facilitated taking static pictures, and photos of dynamic events were therefore not yet seen that frequently.<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, even the static pictures appealed to the public, making their publication an important strategy in the struggle for the reader's attention. In general the integration of photos thus marks a watershed between the established serious press and the popular dailies. One exception in this respect is *De Telegraaf*, which was as cautious in regards to photos as its serious counterparts in this period.

<sup>138</sup> Startt, "Good Journalism," 277.

<sup>139</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 129, 189; Wiener, "How New," 50-52.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Ivon Asquith, "Advertising and the Press in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: James Perry and the Morning Chronicle 1790-1821," in *The Historical Journal* 18, no.4 (1975): 712.

<sup>141</sup> Wiener, "How New," 50-52; cf. David Seymour & Emily Seymour, *A Century of News. A journey through history with the Daily Mirror* (London: Contender, 2003), 50-62; Startt, "Good Journalism," 275-279, 294.

<sup>142</sup> Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 184-186; Karin Becker, "Photojournalism and the Tabloid Press," in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, ed. Peter Dahlgren & John Tulloch (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992), 131-134.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), 125-129; Becker, "Photojournalism," 133, 139-141.

<sup>144</sup> Karin Becker, "Pictures in the press. Yesterday, today, tomorrow," *Nordicom Review* 2 (1996): 12-13; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 163.

This watershed is connected to the novelty of the integration of photographic material in the newspaper. Scholars point to the fact that in this early period photography was still developing and dailies needed to invest in technological equipment to print pictures. These cost considerations played an important part in the role pictures had in the dailies. Still, the success and profitability of the *Daily Mirror* - and other illustrated magazines for that matter - proved that such from a commercial perspective it was worth the investment.<sup>145</sup> A more important issue with regard to the choice to publish photographs was of ethical nature. A common critique was that photographs appealed too much to the reader's emotions, which dailies would exploit commercially by publishing superficial and sensationalistic pictures. According to these critics, quality journalism should rather provide in-depth journalism, with events covered and analyzed thoroughly. On the other hand photography seemed to bring the ideal of journalism as a passive mirror of reality much closer.<sup>146</sup>

The debate about the presumed objectivity vs. the presumed superficial emotional appeal fits in with the struggle between reflective and event-centered journalism. Furthermore, it illustrates that the interaction between the popular and serious press determined the bandwidth of what was accepted within in a newspaper. The dismissive attitude of journalists of the serious press, particularly in France and the Netherlands, towards the new event-centered approach to journalism focused mostly on examples of event-centered story journalism and mostly disregarded its more objective-oriented counterpart. These journalists criticized the diffusion of what they considered to be an 'Americanized' form of journalism for its sensationalistic coverage that focused too much on the emotional side of a story. This focus drew the attention away from a rational and in-depth representation of an event.<sup>147</sup> The first pictures that were published on a regular basis appeared in - mostly American - magazines, or in dailies that were already considered to be of reproachable stature. According to Becker, the use of pictures therefore came to be shorthand for sensationalism and its possible potential for journalistic objectivity was less prominent in the debate.<sup>148</sup>

Thus, my analysis shows the gradual nature of the developments concerning lay-out. The popular dailies put in the most effort to increase their readership by making their paper more accessible and attractive. This is supported by the existing scholarship, which points out that the commercial rationale and stronger competition made attracting an also changed readership more important. This applied to the French, but even more so to the British popular dailies. They focused on a working and middle class public, which could choose from many different dailies. Furthermore, as the earlier quote by Hamilton Fyfe already illustrated, the editors and newspaper owners of these dailies believed that the public they targeted did not have the time or the intention to read a paper from cover to cover, especially when that paper was full of lengthy and intellectual political analyses. For that reason, the dailies had to win over their readers with an appealing lay-out, which guided the reader to the articles he or she was particularly interested in.<sup>149</sup> That these characteristics seem to have manifested themselves not as strongly in the Dutch popular press might be explained by the pillarization of Dutch society and its general effort to educate and culture the lower working class instead of catering to their particular needs. The pillarized society with its loyal segment of society created less competition between the dailies and provided people with a smaller number of papers

<sup>145</sup> Cf. Wiener, "How New," 52.

<sup>146</sup> Patrick Åker, "Photography, Objectivity and the Modern Newspaper," *Journalism Studies* 13, no.3 (2012): 326-327; Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 184-185; Becker, "Photojournalism," 130-135.

<sup>147</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xix; Joel Wiener & Mark Hampton "Introduction: Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850-2000," in *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850-2000*, ed. Joel Wiener & Mark Hampton (Houndmills/Basingstoke/Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 2-5; Ferenczi, *L'invention de journalism*, 14-15.

<sup>148</sup> Becker, "Photojournalism," 132-139.

<sup>149</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 144-145; cf. Brake, "Old Journalism," 19; Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 565.



to choose from. Furthermore, these ideological oriented segments cut across the hierarchical division of society. The combination of the idealistic ideas about the civilizing responsibility of the press together with the more diversified public from the different walks of life can offer an explanation for the reason the novel characteristics of the lay-out did not make that much headway in the Dutch popular press.<sup>150</sup>

## Interviewing as an upcoming practice

The changes in topical focus and the use of visual means are part of a broader discursive development, in which journalistic routines and the conventions of the written texts also changed - be it very gradually. The commercially driven hunt for newsworthy information about what was happening in the world started to compete with more traditional forms of reflecting on the world. Instead of providing an ideologically oriented analysis of national and international events, journalists gradually focused more on covering the events themselves.<sup>151</sup>

Several scholars argue that these changes are rooted in the development of parliamentary reporting, which emerged in Britain in the last decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> and in the Netherlands around 1815 at the moment parliamentary debates became public.<sup>152</sup> In France, the repression of parliamentary reporting was maintained up until the 1880s, and only after that moment did parliamentary reporting emerge.<sup>153</sup> To cover parliamentary debates journalists needed to be present in parliament or at international conventions and parliamentary reporting can be regarded as the first beat with specialized reporters. At first parliamentary journalists - and reporters in general for that matter - were held in low esteem, which is reflected in their coverage.<sup>154</sup> They mainly provided complete verbatim reports of official speeches and debates, which according to several scholars played a pivotal role in especially the British and Dutch dailies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, this genre - which I will discuss more elaborately in the following section - allowed not much space for reporters to capture reality in their own distinct way.<sup>155</sup> As journalists gained more cultural authority they started to be more selective in what they reported, they elicited new information by interviewing the politicians involved, and were more actively organizing the representation of reality. It is therefore not surprising the content analysis shows that the use of these verbatim reports declined throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>156</sup>

Parliamentary reporting thus gave an initial impulse to the active reporting routines that emerged in the 1880s, a development that reflects the improving cultural authority of journalists. Nonetheless, the more active attitude of going out in the streets to find the news cannot be solely attributed to this development. It is also intricately related to the expanding topical orientation and the demand for news, which expedited the gradual move away from a reflective journalism practice.<sup>157</sup> As I mentioned earlier, active reporting is often supposed to have already become a dominant feature of journalistic discourse around the advent of the First World War. However, my analysis of the dailies suggests that

**150** Van Vree, "Massapers," 100-106; Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 40-42; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 41-58; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 144-150.

**151** Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 10-14; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xv-xvi.

**152** Williams, *Read All About It!*, 71-72, 104; De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 112; Huub Wijffes, "Haagse kringen, Haagse vormen. Stijlverandering in politieke journalistiek," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), 19-20.

**153** Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 91-92, 97-98; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 107.

**154** Marcel Broersma, "The Discursive Strategy of a Subversive Genre," in *Vision in text and image: the cultural turn in the study of arts*, ed. Mary Kemperink & Herman Hoen (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 145-149.

**155** Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 262-265.

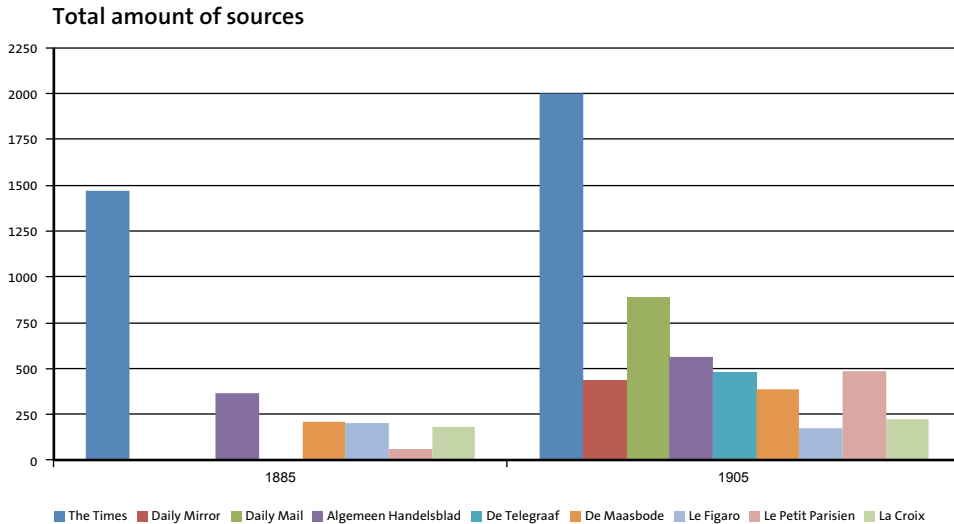
**156** Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 146-147; Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 565-568; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 45-46, 71-72.

**157** Hampton, "Understanding media" 218-227; Høyer, "The Idea of the Book," 10-14; Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 146-147.

this development was much more gradual than often believed. Moreover, clear national differences can be seen as well as some differences between the national newspapers themselves.

To see how reporting and the accompanying discursive norms have developed, I believe the analysis of the attribution of sources and the use of direct quotes in the dailies can offer an interesting insight in these matters. With sources I mean people whose statements are either paraphrased or directly quoted. Thus, citations from documents are generally not taken into account as such a use of sources does not reflect the developments in journalism this research focuses on. Source attribution and the use of direct quotes have been described as important textual markers that signal the use of active reporting routines.<sup>158</sup> These textual characteristics shape the truth claim of an account and help to convince the public of the veracity of the story, in which also the status and authority of the source helps to establish the credibility of an article.<sup>159</sup> Moreover, Tuchman argues that by attributing sources and quoting them a journalist communicates to his readership that his own subjectivity plays no part in the account and fact and opinion are thus separated. Source attribution and direct quotes are therefore considered to be typical features of the objectivity regime. Yet, although they do signal a general distinction between facts and opinion, I argue that they should not be taken as shorthand for objectivity without more reinforcing evidence. Broersma for instance has argued that direct quotes were initially mostly used as a strategy to attract the attention of the reader and to enliven a journalistic article by adding color through the depiction of atmosphere of a situation or the emotions of a particular person.<sup>160</sup> I will discuss and illustrate this latter aspect more thoroughly in the next chapter.

Graph 4.7



<sup>158</sup> Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 563; Broersma, "Performative discourse," 21, 31-32; Mats Ekström, "Interviewing, Quoting and the Development of Modern News Journalism. A study of the Swedish Press 1915-1995," in *News from the Interview Society*, ed. Mats Ekström et al. (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2006), 21-22.

<sup>159</sup> Tuchman, *Making News*, 90-97.

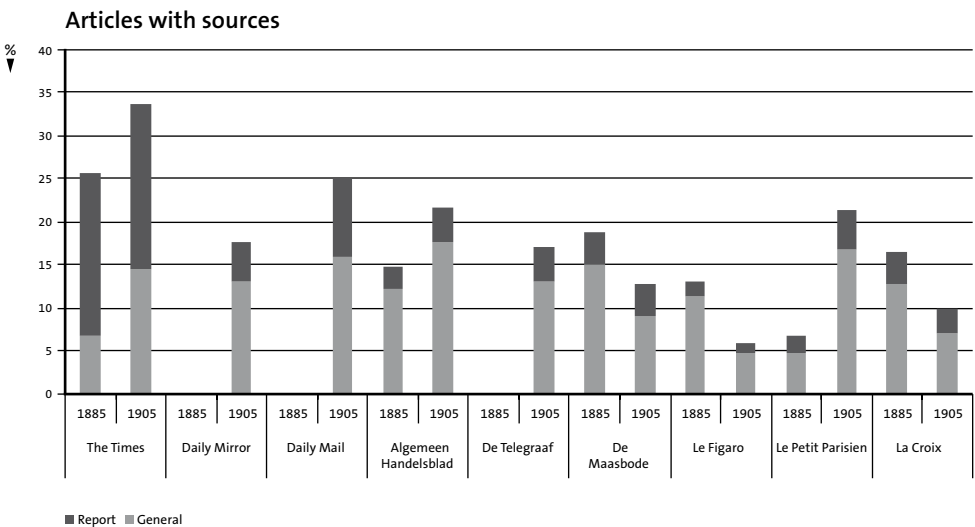
<sup>160</sup> Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 143-144; Høyer, "Rumours of Modernity," 34-35.

The results support the cautious attitude towards source attribution. Graph 4.7 suggests that *The Times* had a *status aparte* when it comes to the use of sources. The daily at least attributes between three to ten times as many sources as the other papers. This large amount of sources in *The Times* can be explained by the dominance of the minute-like report in this paper, which sometimes included more than 15 sources per article.<sup>161</sup> Leaving the reports aside *The Times* still uses more sources than most other dailies - although the difference is certainly not as strong - which was the result of the large network of correspondents and reporters they employed.<sup>162</sup>

In general the British dailies attributed more sources than their Dutch, but especially French counterparts. The *Mirror* is somewhat of an exception, which can be explained by its emphasis on pictorial content, in which sources obviously do not play a role. In the Netherlands *De Maasbode* consults the least amount of sources, which suggests to its preference for reflective journalism. This also applies to the French dailies with the exception of *Le Petit Parisien*, which seems to have developed quite rapidly with regard to reporting between 1885 and 1905.

Absolute numbers however do not tell the whole story, for it cannot take into account the large size differences between the different dailies. The relative numbers regarding the share of articles containing sources however reinforce the results of the absolute numbers (Graph 4.8). The relative numbers support the idea of *The Times* as a daily that most regularly attributed sources. Again, the genre of the report plays a more important role, for without this genre the amount of source consultation is much more like the other dailies. The results therefore nuance the assumed differences between the Anglo-American and the continental European developments of journalism. With regard to the French, and to a lesser extent the Dutch press landscape, the results reinforce the existing image of a press that can be divided in a *presse d'opinion* (*La Croix* and *Le Figaro* for France and *De Maasbode* for the Netherlands) and a *presse d'information* (*Le Petit Parisien* for France and *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *De Telegraaf* for the Netherlands).<sup>163</sup>

Graph 4.8



<sup>161</sup> Cf. Wiener, "How New," 51; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 103-104.  
<sup>162</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 84.  
<sup>163</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xviii; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 94-104; Thogmartin, *The National Daily Press*, 91-96.

Thus, my analysis reinforces the image that reporting as a routine was developing at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but nuances its pace and active nature as most of the reporting consisted of the more passive verbatim reports. Actively seeking out people, often dignitaries, to elicit information by questioning them seems to have been a less common practice. This is in line with prior research, which argues that interviewing as a routine emerged and was accepted first in the American press. For a long time both officials and journalists in Europa had an ambivalent attitude towards this routine. For instance, up until the 1930s reporters in Europe were advised not to take notes during the interview, because this could make the interviewee uncomfortable.<sup>164</sup> Interviewing was considered to be disrespectful and politicians and other dignitaries were reluctant to cooperate (which can also be seen in the marginal role of the interview as a genre in this period) out of fear that their words would be twisted. Especially the use of direct quotes was controversial. This is nicely illustrated by the words of the French novelist Edmond de Goncourt, who said:

[W]here everything I have told a reporter is fake, adulterated, ridiculous. These reporters who do not have penny's worth of memory and who do not deign to take notes. From now on I will tell them: I only talk to reporters that take notes.<sup>165</sup>

From this perspective, the development of interviewing can be regarded as a power struggle that was going on between journalists and officials and dignitaries over the representation of reality. According to Matheson source attribution and the use of direct quotes emerged between the 1880s and 1920s as an important practice. He argues that this should be regarded as an important step in the emergence of journalism's particular cultural mode of expression, signaling its professional independence as a domain and the cultural authority of the reporter.<sup>166</sup> Instead of displaying full accounts of what officials had said, they replaced these accounts with their own selection and interpretation of reality, in which they fitted the information the sources had put forward. The integration of direct quotes within especially the serious dailies can therefore be seen as an indication of the degree to which reporting was accepted as common journalistic practice, as these dailies played the most important role in setting the professional standards.<sup>167</sup>

Yet, contrary to Matheson's analysis, my results indicate that up until the First World War the active reporting routines were certainly not embraced yet. Only a small percentage of the articles in the dailies contained direct quotes (Graph 4.9). The hesitance of the dailies in this respect is therefore a strong argument for the claim that the new reporting routines and norms were still very much in their infancy. By 1905 at least 92% of the articles in the dailies did not yet contain direct quotes and these percentages, especially for *The Times*, are even lower if the reports are disregarded.

Apart from *De Telegraaf* the popular dailies have a frontrunner position in the use of direct quotes. *Le Petit Parisien* proves itself again as a progressive daily and displays a considerable increase in the integration of direct quotes between 1885 and 1905. It is the only continental daily in the sample that measures up to the British papers in this respect, which provides further evidence for the claim that the journalistic development in the French press is not as 'belated' as often assumed.<sup>168</sup> What is striking is the general reticence of the Dutch dailies in using direct quotes, indicating the existence of strong national discourse, in which interviewing was considered a violation of the individual

<sup>164</sup> Schudson, *Power of News*, 81-82.

<sup>165</sup> Edmon de Goncourt & Jules de Goncourt cited in: Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 33.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 570-571; Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 146-147; Pöttker, "Perspectives," 266-267.

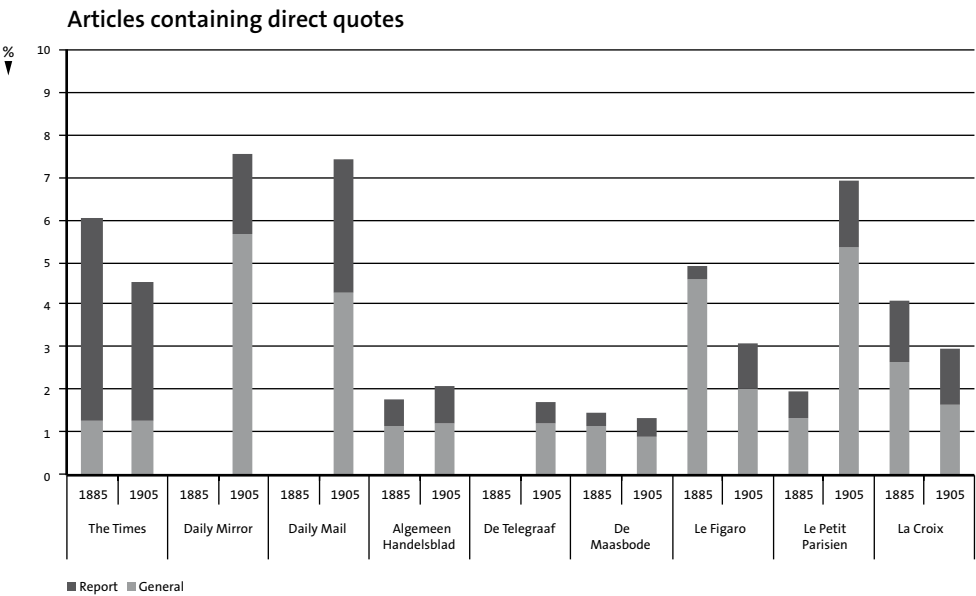
<sup>167</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xxvii; Startt, "Good Journalism," 276, 293-294.

<sup>168</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 304-313.

privacy and freedom.<sup>169</sup>

The analysis of both the attribution of sources and the integration of direct quotes shows that with the exception of *Le Figaro* and *La Croix* the use of sources was generally increasing. With regard to direct quotes the popular dailies in Britain and France were a bit ahead of the other dailies, but they only played a marginal role in their editorial content. Moreover, examining the share of articles with sources and quotes, it becomes clear that for a large part these articles mainly reiterated the full debates and statements by dignitaries rather than seeking them out to actively elicit information.

Graph 4.9



Interviewing thus indeed seems to still have been rather unconventional in this period and quoting people directly was not yet considered proper journalistic conduct.<sup>170</sup> This is reinforced by the fact that the popular dailies were mostly the ones that integrated direct quotes. This makes it likely that in this period they were mainly seen as a somewhat vulgar means to attract readers, rather than as a discursive strategy of accountability that earned the trust of the readers.<sup>171</sup> Overall, the results suggest that the cultural status of journalists was still rather low and it points to the slow acceptance of an event-centered journalism practice. This also indicates that the representative ideal of journalism was still in development, and journalism did not have the authority yet to assume the role of society's watchdog, in the sense of critically questioning the political establishment.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 60-61; Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 148.

<sup>170</sup> Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 149-152; Matheson, "Birth of News discourse," 562-563, 571; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 60-62.

<sup>171</sup> Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 143-144.

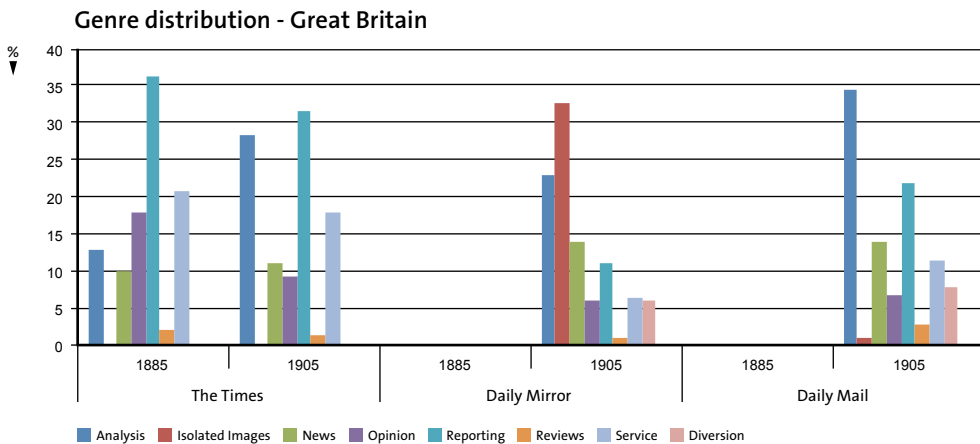
<sup>172</sup> Hampton, "Understanding media," 215-226.

## On the threshold - the gradual adoption of new forms

The same conclusions can be drawn based on the use of the journalistic genres by the dailies. Press historians often argue that the growing importance of factual news and the rise of event-centered news reporting find proof in the growing prominence of genres such as the interview and the reportage. According to them, they replaced the traditional genres, like the long reflective and opinionated articles, that had become outdated and were therefore abandoned.<sup>173</sup> Yet, although factual news certainly became more important within the dailies and with it reporting gained terrain within the dailies, the data I have collected strongly suggests that this did not happen as fast as these scholars have suggested. My analysis of the genres in the dailies in this period conveys a much more gradual and multiform development. The reportage and the interview only developed gradually and for a long time existed alongside the more reflective genres.<sup>174</sup> Reporting as a routine did indeed infuse the development of new genres like the interview and the reportage, with their own set of textual characteristics. Yet, this happened only very slowly and the use of these genres remained rather marginal for quite some time. Moreover, as Muhlmann argues reflective and event-centered genres were not always that clearly distinguished from each other.<sup>175</sup>

In Britain, which is generally portrayed as the country that guided the way with regard to the journalistic development, analysis and opinion kept on playing a key role in the newspaper, although clear opinionated articles lost ground to more analytic pieces, especially in the popular dailies (Graph 4.10). News reports accounted for between 10% and 15% of the editorial content with the highest percentages in the popular dailies. The share of reporting in the dailies differed considerably and *The Times* was ahead of its popular counterparts with more than 30% of its content devoted to reporting, whereas the *Mail* and the *Mirror* consisted of respectively 20% and 10%.

Graph 4.10



The *Mirror*, however, is a story of its own, because of its use of photographs as unique selling point. The daily consists for more than 30% out of photographs. These photographs can be considered a specific

**173** Høyer, "The idea of the Book," 13-14; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xv-xix.

**174** Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xviii-xxiii; Muhlmann, *Political History*, 17.

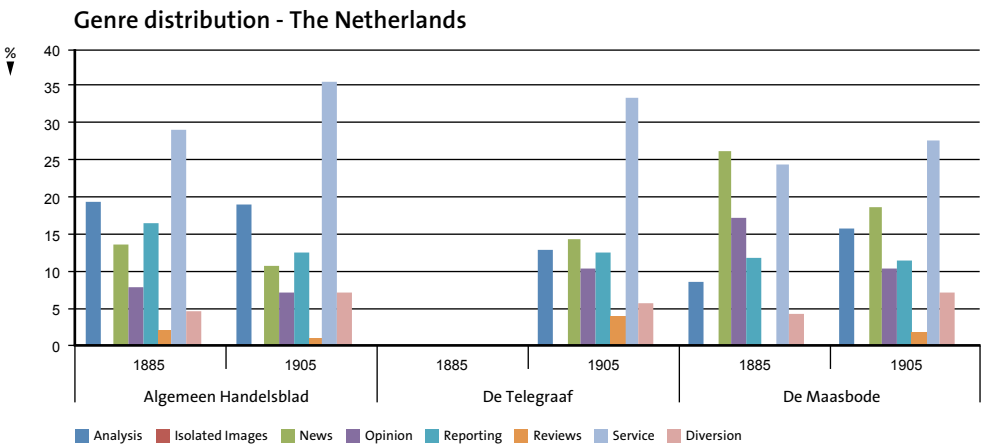
**175** Muhlmann, *Political History*, 17.

form of news reporting and point to a shift towards an event-centered journalism practice. This is supported by the following statement of Northcliffe when he founded the daily: “Our illustrations are themselves news. Every day the camera [...] will produce for our readers the news of the day.”<sup>176</sup>

Contrary to its popular counterparts, *The Times* also published a lot of financial and stock trade figures to facilitate its elite public of businessmen. The fact that both the *Mirror* and the *Mail* published fewer of these numerical overviews points to the focus on a different readership. Furthermore, it also suggests a different journalistic focus, in which journalists had become more selective about what they covered and did not think it necessary to publish every detail about the world.<sup>177</sup> This is reinforced by the difference in the use of the genre of the report as I will discuss in the last section. Nevertheless, on the level of the journalistic genres the differences between the dailies do not yet suggest a large divide between the serious press and the popular dailies.<sup>178</sup>

The Dutch dailies show a slightly different picture with all three papers publishing a considerable amount of financial figures (Graph 4.11). The space devoted to analysis is smaller with *Algemeen Handelsblad* publishing the most analytic pieces, whereas *De Telegraaf* and *De Maasbode* devoted a bit more space to opinionated articles. The share of reporting is more or less the same in all dailies, which is considerably lower than in the British dailies. The share of news reports is a bit higher in *De Telegraaf* than in *Algemeen Handelsblad*, which resembles the British situation. *De Maasbode* offers an interesting and somewhat puzzling picture. It devotes a larger share of its newshole to news reports than other dailies in this period. Yet, these figures give the relative picture and the large share of news of *De Maasbode* can be explained by its small newshole. Furthermore, opinion gave way to analysis, which is small indication of a development towards becoming a less reflective daily.

Graph 4.11



The French press in general shows a move away from reflective journalism as the share of opinion decreases considerably in all the dailies (Graph 4.12). Reporting had increased slightly by 1905 as well as the share of analysis with the exception of *Le Figaro*. The image of the latter as a daily with

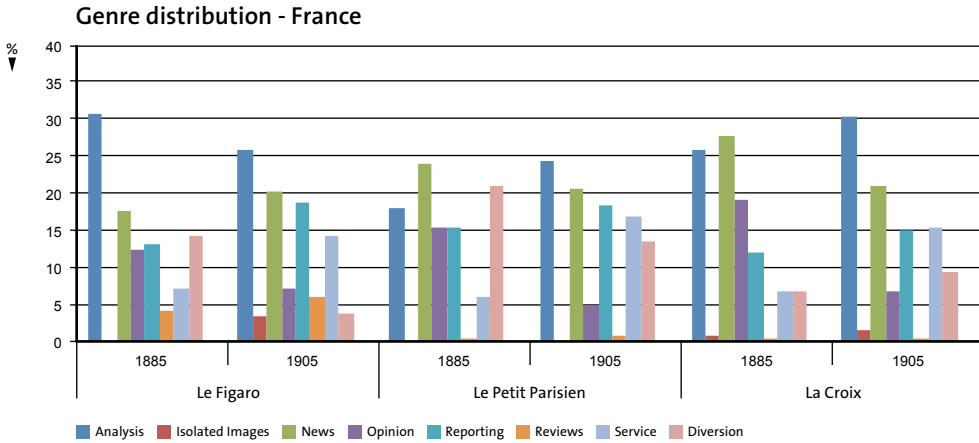
<sup>176</sup> Northcliffe cited in: Seymour & Seymour, *A Century of News*, 7.

<sup>177</sup> Wiener, “How New,” 53-55; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 142.

<sup>178</sup> Startt, “Good Journalism,” 277.

a strong literary orientation is reinforced by the relatively large share of reviews compared to the other papers.

Graph 4.12



What is striking with the French papers is the large share the news report has in all the dailies compared to their British and Dutch counterparts. Although it does suggest that the dominance of reflective articles is somewhat exaggerated, this should not be taken as evidence that the French press actually focused more on news than the British and Dutch dailies.<sup>179</sup> The results do not shed light on the nature of the articles. Moreover, the large size differences between the dailies make a comparison complicated. To be able to give a nuanced image it is necessary to take the absolute numbers into account as well.

The absolute figures reinforce the idea that opinion, although it does not always diminish in absolute numbers, is getting more competition from articles focusing on the background or context (Graph 4.13). This is especially apparent in *The Times* which does publish much less opinion - although because of its size it was still more than most other dailies. It is striking that *De Telegraaf* clearly published more opinion than *Algemeen Handelsblad* suggesting that the difference between serious dailies and popular dailies does not hold in this respect.<sup>180</sup>

The absolute figures also offer an interesting perspective on the focus on news by the different dailies. The success of the popular dailies is often attributed - especially with regard the British press - to their more extensive news coverage.<sup>181</sup> However, the results indicate that *The Times* devoted more attention to news than its popular counterparts. Somewhat ironically, this is only the case in the Netherlands and France - although the differences are not that large. Furthermore, it is interesting to see that by 1905 the differences in the amount of news are not that big anymore between the French and the British dailies. The same goes for the amount of reporting. Only *La Croix* remained to offer a rather modest amount of news and reporting compared to its counterparts. Again these results only

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention" 304-306.

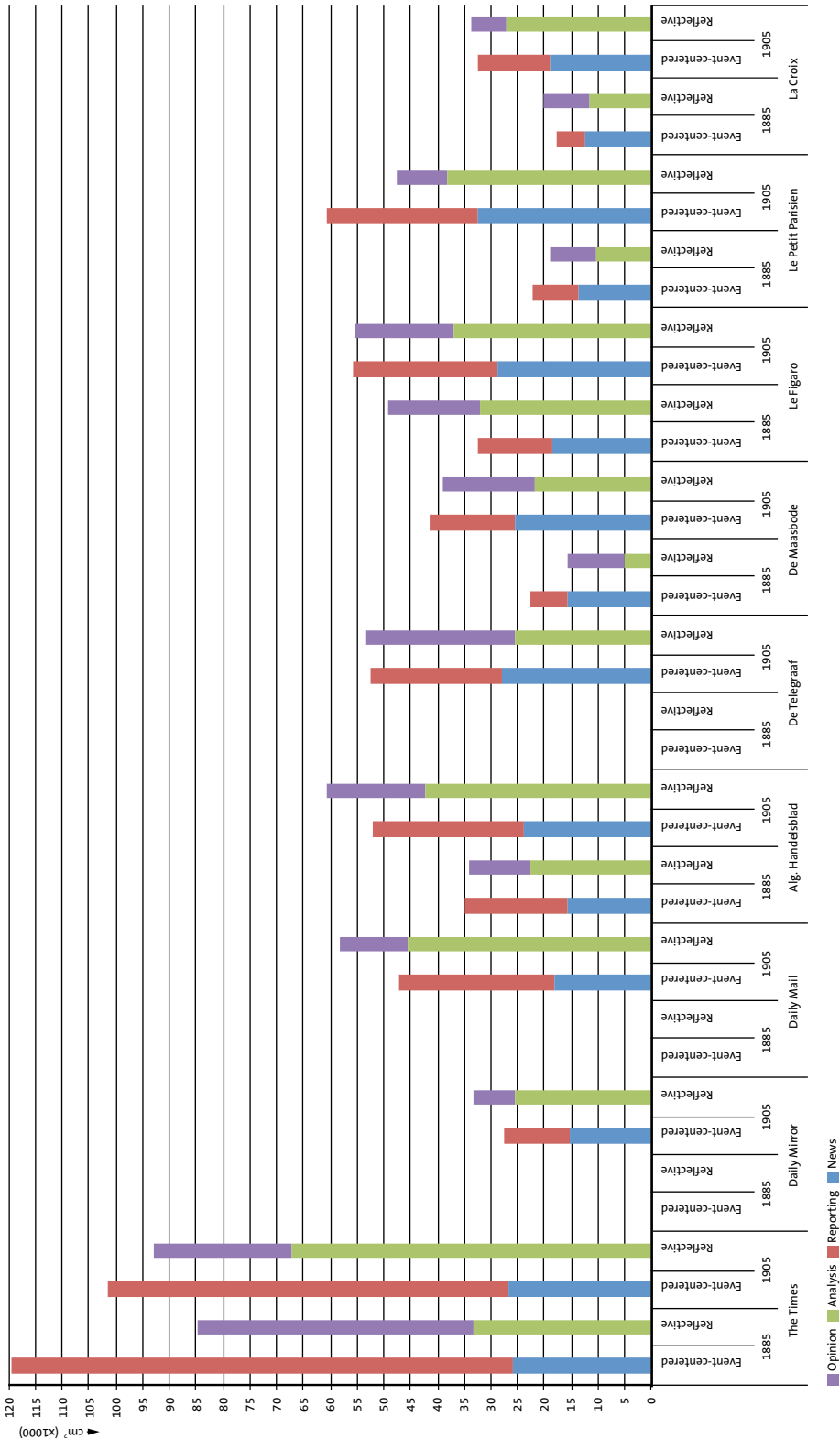
<sup>180</sup> This percentage matches the results of the content analysis in Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, vi appendix 2a [doctoral thesis edition].

<sup>181</sup> Chalaby, "Smiling Pictures," 34; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 142-143; Wiener, "How New," 53; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 39-40.



Graph 4.13

Event-centered vs. Reflective genres

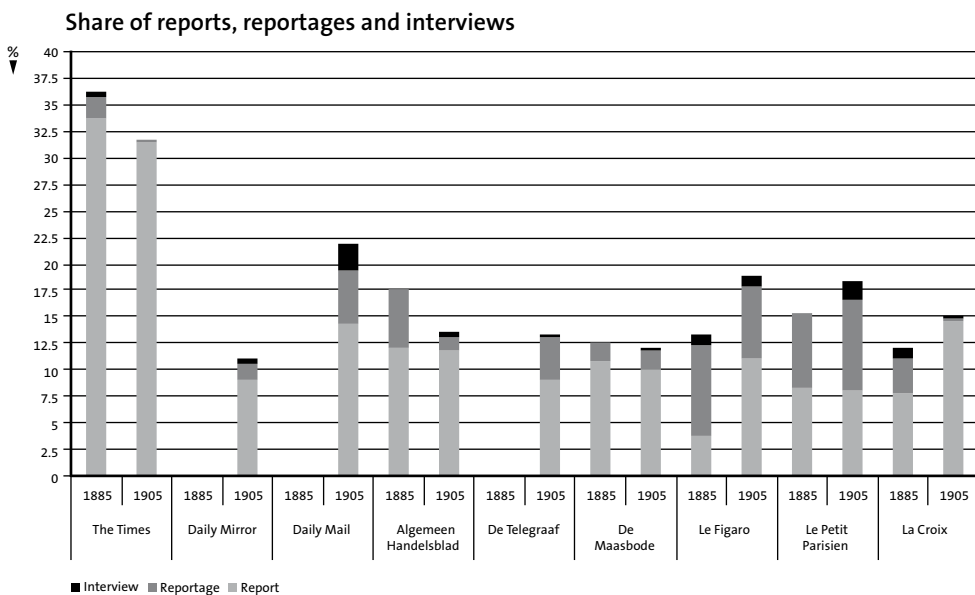


give a broad idea about the specific characteristics of these articles, and does not account for the speed with which the information is published. Nevertheless, the claim that the French press lagged behind with regard to their focus on news does seem to be an exaggeration.<sup>182</sup>

## The reportage vs. the report

In his history of *de Leeuwarder Courant*, the oldest still existing newspaper in the Netherlands, Broersma argues that “the report (the Dutch *verslag*) was the most important journalistic innovation of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>183</sup> This genre, which developed in relation to the already discussed rise of parliamentary reporting and the invention of shorthand, offered verbatim and chronologically structured accounts of at first mostly political debates and speeches.<sup>184</sup> Shortly after, the genre was also used to cover international conventions, stockholders meetings and sports events.<sup>185</sup> Several scholars have shown how it was becoming a dominant genre in the British and Dutch press in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This holds *a fortiori* for *The Times*, which based its status as first and foremost ‘paper of record’ on this genre.<sup>186</sup>

Graph 4.14



This is in line with my results, which show that both in Britain and in the Netherlands the report maintained its important position within the paper throughout the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and only gradually lost ground from the 1920s onwards (Graph 4.14). In the French press however, the report made less headway altogether. It was introduced somewhat later in history, and it was

<sup>182</sup> Cf. Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 305.

<sup>183</sup> Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 172.

<sup>184</sup> Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 172; De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 112; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 104.

<sup>185</sup> De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 113; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 104.

<sup>186</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 84; Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 11–12.

granted a less prominent role in journalistic discourse. This can be partially attributed to the long censorship of parliamentary reporting, but also by the strong connection between journalism and the political and literary discourse.<sup>187</sup> This double dependency cultivated the strong emphasis on reflective genres and valued an expressive style. This can explain why the report, having entirely opposite characteristics, had a weaker position in French journalism discourse.<sup>188</sup>

The emergence of the report is seen as a first step towards adopting the news paradigm. As was already mentioned, the genre is believed to indicate a relatively low position of the reporter, who was not yet entitled to show his or her own organizing hand.<sup>189</sup> The emergence of novel journalistic genres like the reportage and the interview is considered to signal a more active way of uncovering reality. For these genres, which developed out of the routines of respectively on-site reporting and interviewing, journalists had to select and interpret information. As a result such genres led to a journalism practice in which the reader was presented with a much more actively organized and structured image of the world - while still being presented as mirroring reality. According to several press historians, passively recorded information, like the report produced, was losing ground after these novel genres were introduced at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>190</sup> Especially, the report and reportage are often regarded as two consecutive phases in the development of reporting, reflecting the reporter's transition from passive mouthpiece to active mediator.<sup>191</sup>

However, with the reportage in the French press as somewhat of an exception, the results indicate that in this period the new genres appeared still much more sparsely in the dailies than is suggested in many press histories and the passive reporting genre of the reports played first fiddle in the dailies. Especially the interview played only a rather small role in journalistic discourse of this period and would only become a common genre after the Second World War. The reportage was a slightly more popular genre, but particularly in Britain and the Netherlands had a modest role in journalism. In Britain the genre first appeared in *The Times* in 1885, but had lost terrain by 1905, and at that moment the genre manifested itself stronger in the *Mail*. With some fluctuations of its popularity over the years, the genre also figured in the Dutch press. The decline of the reportage between 1885 and 1905 in *Algemeen Handelsblad* is somewhat puzzling, for this daily has been mentioned as one of the Dutch dailies that used this genre to profile itself.<sup>192</sup> Only in France, the reportage was a more prominent genre in the French press, with the exception of the reflective *La Croix*. Overall, though, it seems that the interview and the reportage entered journalistic discourse much more gradually than often assumed. This also suggests that the rise of the news paradigm was a much more gradual process.<sup>193</sup>

Moreover, the fact that the reportage played a stronger role in France - the country that is generally considered to be fairly late in adopting an event-centered journalism practice - warrants a closer look at the origins of this genre in relation to the affordance of the news paradigm. Research into this genre shows that in France the reportage did not only evolve out of the rise of on-site reporting, but was also infused by the literary inspired journalistic tradition in which the author conveyed his or her own colored daily experiences or *faits divers*, fusing analysis, opinion and factual observation, like the

<sup>187</sup> Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 19-42; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 52-60; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 313-320; Dubbelboer, "Rewriting the News," 157-164.

<sup>188</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xviii; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 115-123.

<sup>189</sup> Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 562-563.

<sup>190</sup> Broersma, "Performative Discourse," 21; Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 562-563; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 127-133.

<sup>191</sup> De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 122-123; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 54-60; Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 562-568.

<sup>192</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 58-59.

<sup>193</sup> Cf. Graaf, R. de (2010). 122-123; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 58-62; Wolf, "An Anglo-American Newspapers," 89.

popular chronique and physiologie. The literary writer and journalist Paul Ginisty for example called the reportage a form in which he presented information “in the manner of the small chronique.”<sup>194</sup> In Britain the development of the reportage should be seen as mainly connected to the rise of on-site reporting, which evolved out of the more or less verbatim report.<sup>195</sup> The development of the genre in the Netherlands can be situated somewhere in-between that of Britain and France. It was related to the genre of the report, but also found its inspiration in a more literary way of conveying subjective and colored perceptions.<sup>196</sup>

French, and to a lesser extent, Dutch journalism, thus had a strong and longer-lasting literary orientation within reporting as a discursive practice.<sup>197</sup> The connection between journalism and literature was reinforced by the many budding literary authors, to whom journalism could offer a steady income while they were building their literary career. Moreover, as scholars have pointed out that particularly in France literary writers had established an esteemed position within society as writer-intellectual. By presenting themselves as independent minds whose perspective on society could offer an important counterweight to institutional politics their voices were seen as important within the public debate, of which the Dreyfus’ affaire offered an important example. During this affair a Jewish soldier was falsely accused and convicted of being a German spy. The diatribe, *J’accuse..!*, published in *L’Aurore*, by novelist Emile Zola against this miscarriage of justice is a famous example of the important role literary writers had in the public debate.<sup>198</sup> Collaboration with a daily newspaper offered writers a platform to voice their opinions to a large audience. In this period, journalism and literature in France and to a lesser extent the Netherlands, in which journalists saw France as an example in this respect, had a fruitful cross-fertilizing relation to each other. Working as a journalist became some kind of preamble to the literary domain.<sup>199</sup>

As a result reporters positioned themselves close to the literary domain. They were considered to be the little brothers of the esteemed literary writers and the difference between them was not well delineated. For that reason a literary style was positively sanctioned within journalism, and reporters could build their status and gain cultural authority this way. An important consequence of this status-by-association of journalists was that in comparison to the British reporters the cultural authority of particularly such reporters was much larger. Whereas the British reporters were more or less bound to the original modes of expression of for instance the politicians, their French and Dutch equivalents enjoyed more freedom because of their connection with the literary domain and could show more of their organizing hand in their journalistic accounts.<sup>200</sup>

The cross-pollination of both domains was not some fortuitous development. In this period the literary movement of naturalism came into fashion, in which the depiction of reality in all its facets played a pivotal role. According to this conception, literature was not to idealize the world, but should

194 Ferenczi, *L’invention du journalisme*, 49-55, 77-87, 93-96; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 32; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 58-59, 62-64; Although Wijffes does not see the *physiologie* as a direct precursor of the reportage I think it is likely that this genre was an important influence on the development of the reportage.

195 Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 142-143; Wiener, “How New,” 53; Matheson, “Birth of News Discourse,” 562-565; Wijffes, “Modernization of Style,” 63-65.

196 Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 122-124; Wijffes, “Modernization of Style,” 72-73; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 58-59, 62-65.

197 Ferenczi, *L’invention du journalisme*, 49-55; Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 303-310; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-65.

198 Ferenczi, *L’invention du journalisme*, 183-187; Dubbelboer, “Rewriting the News,” 161-164; Van den Broek, “Imaginable Reality,” 150-152; Jeremy Jennings & Tony Kemp-Welch, “Introduction,” in *Intellectuals in politics: From the Dreyfus affair to the Rushdie affair*, ed. Jeremy Jennings & Tony Kemp-Welch (London: Routledge, 1997), 5-8.

199 Ferenczi, *L’invention du journalisme*, 49-55; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 52-60; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-66; Dubbelboer, “Rewriting the News,” 160.

200 Cf. Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 114-115.

portray it with all its rough edges.<sup>201</sup> Although Zola uses the term 'objectivity' to describe this way of writing, it involved an expressive way of portraying reality and a subjective way of description - a way of depiction that should not be equated with opinionated reporting - which I will discuss more in detail in the following chapter. This outlook on literature developed simultaneously with the on-site reporting routines, which together determined the outlook of the reportage in France and the Netherlands.<sup>202</sup> Conversely, the British press in this period had reached a junction and was gradually moving away from its earlier entwinement with the literary and political domain. Within this context reporting developed more as a discursive practice in which concise and straightforward descriptive coverage would become the norm.<sup>203</sup>

Research into the professional status of the reporter suggests that these differences also translated in a different position of the reporter in the respective countries. In the British journalistic domain around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century certain editorialists and analytics were held in high esteem as intellectual men of letters. The reporter however was not so much a man of letters with a natural disposition for literature, but considered more as skilled artisan or trained professional and was for that reason not held in high esteem by the cultural elite. The reporter could only reproduce the words of others, but lacked a distinctive voice.<sup>204</sup> Conversely, in France, and to a lesser extent the Netherlands, the journalistic and literary domain were more entwined, which allowed the reporters draw upon the esteemed position of the literary writer by adopting similar discursive forms.<sup>205</sup> As Ruellan has formulated it:

An influence in the development of reporting methods is rarely emphasized; it is however decisive: it is the participation of literary writers in the contemporary press and in general the way literature - which sets the central cultural standard in the 19<sup>th</sup> century - has radiated to the dailies.<sup>206</sup>

Although journalism relied less on the original and creative mind of the author than literature, a reporter still needed to have an innate literary disposition to be able to convey reality in an authentic way. To a certain extent the reporters in France and the Netherlands had a different, more esteemed occupation ideal, which was somewhat at odds with the discursive forms of event-centered journalism. A qualitative exploration of the reportages in the sample of the content analysis suggests that this disparity is reflected in the development and characteristics of the reportage. Although further research is necessary for a solid confirmation, it seems that in Britain, and this especially applies to *The Times*, the genre remained rather close to the report often only adding a few elements that portray atmosphere of an event, whereas the Dutch and especially the French reportages could be much more expressive. Apart from this, the genre within the British context is mostly used to describe criminal events or human interest or lifestyle topics.

This also goes for the Dutch and French reportages, but occasionally the dailies publish more extensive reportages focusing on more significant issues. These grand reportages are distinguished from the more superficial petit reportages dealing mostly with crime, accidents, human interest,

<sup>201</sup> Kemperink, "Wat wil het naturalisme?," 55-57; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-65; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 45-48; Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 20-24.

<sup>202</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 58-65.

<sup>203</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 303-326; Brake, "Old Journalism," 7-11, 16-17; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 13.

<sup>204</sup> Matheson, "Birth of News Discourse," 561-564; Philip Elliott, "Professional ideology and organizational change: the journalist since 1800," in *Newspaper history: from the 17th century to the present day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978), 176-180; Brake, "Old Journalism," 7-10.

<sup>205</sup> Schudson, "Objectivity Norm," 166-167.

<sup>206</sup> Ruellan, *Le professionnalisme du flou*, 103.

lifestyle or other faits divers, and generally focus on more significant events, like wars, international conflicts or social-economic issues for which a reporter often had to travel and spent more time reporting. This type of reportages was therefore rather costly, but also more prestigious than the petit reportage. For such extensive accounts most dailies employed their star reporters, whose writing style was, especially in France, clearly oriented on literary discourse.<sup>207</sup> Nevertheless, such grand reportages were still scarce in the period before the First World War partly because they were both time consuming and rather expensive. However, the First World War gave the grand reportage a boost, for which reason next chapter takes a closer look at the reportages about the First World War in the three respective countries.

## Conclusion

In general, my inquiry into the textual conventions of journalism in the respective countries demands an adjustment of the existing ideas about the way journalism developed based on an examination of the institutional changes and statement by journalists about their occupation. The image my results convey is that of a discursive wheel that has been set in motion by the institutional developments in the different press systems. The rise of the popular dailies incited a debate on journalism, in which the journalistic standards were at stake. However, the institutional changes and debate about journalism only gradually manifested themselves within the dailies, and the novel ideas with regard to reporting had certainly not yet grown to full stature by the start of the First World War. The popular dailies, especially in Britain and France, had the most progressive attitude, and took the lead in these developments. They had the most attractive lay-out, and with the exception of *De Telegraaf* they were the first to integrate photos in the newspaper on a regular basis. These dailies broadened the scope of the newspaper journalism by extending the traditional focus on politics and economy to more appealing and entertaining topics like crime, accidents, human interest, lifestyle, and sports. However, the topics they focused on do not offer a uniform picture. There are many disparities between the different popular dailies, which might be explained by the fact that they are rooted in a shared national journalism tradition.

While the popular dailies took their first steps on the road to journalistic innovation, the serious press stuck to their traditional strongholds. Firmly hanging on to their authoritative positions, these dailies were reluctant to adapt their journalism practice. With regard to their topical orientation, they kept on focusing on politics and economy in the British and Dutch case, and politics and culture in the French. The broader scope of topics within the ranks of the popular dailies was considered to be a 'feather-brained' development, which was discredited as shallow and sensationalist.<sup>208</sup> This conservative attitude of the serious press with regard to the topical content extends to the development of event-centered journalism. The active reporting routines, like interviewing and on-site reporting, the accompanying textual conventions, such as the integration of direct quotes and the use of novel genres like the interview and the reportage were not yet important within the serious press. The scarcity of direct quotes is especially telling in this respect. Although the popular dailies were less hesitant towards these changes the active reporting routines were not really embraced across the board. The authoritative position of the serious press with regard to the journalistic standards seems to have delimited the degree to which the popular press could deviate from the dominant journalistic practices. The results suggest the gradual pace of the adoption of the

<sup>207</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 64-68; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 35-48; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 47-52.

<sup>208</sup> Brake, "Old Journalism," 7-11; Sparks, "Introduction," 18-19.

event-centered journalism practice.

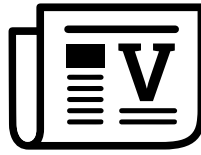
Subsequently the objectivity regime did not play a significant role in this period. Factual reporting was becoming increasingly important but was not clearly delineated yet. The competition between reflective and event-centered journalism was only just under way. This struggle is reflected in the respective press landscapes of the three countries, in which the differences between the different types of journalism, like Broersma's model outlines, certainly had not crystallized yet. In France, for instance the opposition of the *presse d'opinion* shows characteristics of both reflective journalism and event-centered information journalism and the *presse d'information* seems to be a mix between event-centered information journalism and event-centered story journalism. In turn, the Netherlands has such a uniform journalistic discourse that in comparison to France and Great Britain fact-centered story journalism is hardly discernible. Finally, the important role reflective articles play in *The Times* shows that although partisan journalism was fading away reflective journalism still played an important role in the serious press.

Although the image of Great Britain as the frontrunner with regard to even-centered journalism is thus somewhat exaggerated, it did already diverge from French and Dutch journalism in an important respect. Whereas French and to a lesser extent Dutch journalism had a strong orientation on the literary domain, British journalism was taking the first steps towards the disconnection from literature. Professional ideals specific for journalism started to emerge, focusing on the journalists as a skilled professional rather than an aspiring literary author. This divergence is supported by the status and characteristics of the reportage, which was developing into a far more important genre in France and to a lesser extent the Netherlands than in Great Britain. The British preference of the minute-like report over the colorful prose of the reportage signifies a divergence between British journalism on the one hand and France and Dutch journalism on the other, that developed further in the inter-war period.<sup>209</sup>

Nevertheless, the development of the reportage was still very much in its infancy in the period up until the First World War. The appearance of the genre was rather an exception than a common sight in the newspapers. The genre was still only on the threshold of journalistic discourse, instead of having arrived at the center of the everyday practice like other journalism historians have suggested.<sup>210</sup> In the next chapter I will delve deeper into the characteristics of the reportage and its position within newspaper journalism in the three respective countries. I will show how the First World War was both a catalyst for the reportage and also a hinge point with regard to the divergent development of the genre in Great Britain, and in France and the Netherlands respectively. This divergent development of this genre elucidates certain key characteristics and disparities in the development of the respective journalistic discourse.

<sup>209</sup> Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 19-47.

<sup>210</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 59; De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 122; Wolf, "An Anglo-American Newspaper," 87-89; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 47-55; Martin, *Grands reporters*, 9-12.



# “Ils ont bombardé Reims en nous avons vu cela!”<sup>1</sup>

## Reportages about the Great War

War has always fired people's imagination and attracted writers of all kind. The tension between the tragedies of war and the deep comradeship between soldiers offer ingredients for compelling and rather stunning accounts of life and death. The many novels, poems, and movies about war attest to this.<sup>2</sup> War is also a highly newsworthy event. It has an important political impact and deeply affects international relations. But from a human interest perspective a war can be highly compelling as well. With the rise of the mass press, newspaper owners and editors quickly realized that war offered a commercial opportunity. War spoke to the national sentiments of the population and aroused curiosity. It is therefore not surprising that war has always been expatiated on by the press. The desire to give a truthful and compelling depiction of the war has often fostered new ways of conveying reality. Consequently, scholars have repeatedly pointed to the war as being a catalyst for journalistic development.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore not entirely surprising that the First World War marks a significant period in European journalism history.

The First World War is generally acknowledged as an important, but paradoxical moment in (Western) European journalism history. The war dominated the news for four years. This period in journalism history has often been characterized as a low point, arguing that four years of state censorship and propaganda replaced trustworthy and truthful journalism practice. On the other hand the sudden absence of reliable information from official canals forced journalism to use other ways of newsgathering, which gave a boost to on-site reporting and offered an impulse to the development of the reportage. It also raised awareness about the necessity of a trustworthy journalism practice, and incited a debate about the standards journalism should uphold.<sup>4</sup>

The development of the reportage in the three countries shows that the authority of on-site reporting resided for an important part in the presence of the reporter. In this period the model of

1 Translation: “They bombed Rheims and we saw it happen!”

2 Cf. Vincent Sherry, *The Great War and the Language of Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Jonathan Vance, “The Soldier as Novelist: Literature, History, and the Great War,” *Canadian Literature* 179 (2003): 22-37; Adrian Barlow, *The Great War in British Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Geert Buelens, *Europa! Europa!: over de dichters van de Grote Oorlog* (Antwerpen: Manteau, 2008); Léon Riegel, *Guerre et littérature: les bouleversement des consciences dans la littérature romanesque inspire par la Grande Guerre (1910-1930)* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1978).

3 Cf. Mattias Karmasin et al. “Preface: Perspectives on the Changing Role of the Mass Media in Hostile Conflicts,” in *Selling War. The Role of Mass Media in Hostile Conflicts from World War I to the “War on Terror”*, ed. Josef Seethaler et.al. (Bristol/Chicago: Intellect, 2013). ix; Stuart Allan & Barbie Zelizer, “Rules of engagement: journalism and war,” in *Reporting War. Journalism in Wartime*, ed. Stuart Allan & Barbie Zelizer (Oxon: Routledge, 2004), 3-12.

4 Broersma, “Botsende stijlen,” 41-69; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-122; cf. Arnold Karskens, *Pleisters op de ogen, pleister op de mond: de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse oorlogsverslaggeving van Heiligerlee tot Kosovo* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 2001). 64-79; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 20-34; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 112-118; Colin Lovelace, “British press censorship during the First World War,” in *Newspaper History from the seventeenth century to the present day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978), 307-319; Martin Farrar, *News from the Front. War Correspondents on the Western Front 1914-1918* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1998), 2-15.



the journalist as “witness-ambassador”, who observes on behalf of the readership, had arisen. This notion, coined by French press historian Géraldine Muhlmann, marks a shift towards a stronger emphasis on facts. The focus on facts also marked a distinction of reporting from opinionated articles, but in this period the separation of both was not strictly enforced and opinion could often be found in the reporting articles as well.<sup>5</sup> The fact that both opinion articles and reportages were published on the specific leader pages in the British dailies supports this claim. Still, journalists now needed to voice “well-founded opinions, judgments based on reliable facts”, which shows that the distinction was accepted.<sup>6</sup> In this period however, the subjective nature of the on-site observations underlying factual reporting is not considered problematic. On the contrary, emphasizing his or her observing presence within the account seems to have contributed to its credibility.<sup>7</sup> Clearly the bonds between facts and subjective experience were not cut yet. As I will show in the following chapters, it would take up until the Second World War for journalism to embrace this separation across the board. Only Britain already moved closer to a depersonalized way of reporting during the inter-war period.

The reportage thus elucidates the way journalism in the different countries was supposed to render a trustworthy representation of reality. The national differences between the reportages about the war indicate that within British journalism the model of the witness-ambassador already was a more straightforward, aloof and concise form of reporting. Conversely, the use of a broader set of narrative means in the Dutch, but first and foremost the French reportages, suggests that rather a lifelike and colorful representation of an authentic experience counted as a truthful story in these countries. The influence of literary naturalism, in which observation is colored by the emotional impact it has on the person witnessing, was an important inspiration for these reporters.<sup>8</sup> This supports the conclusion of the previous chapter that British journalism discourse was taking the first steps in demarcating itself more clearly from other cultural modes of expression than Dutch and French journalism discourse. Nonetheless, the objectivity regime clearly did not play a significant role.

## War reporting and censorship

War was a lucrative business for dailies as they made sales rise considerably.<sup>9</sup> Up until the First World War most newspapers relied to a great extent on the large network of correspondents of the international press agencies for their newsworthy information about the different wars.<sup>10</sup> In general, most dailies did not yet have a large network of permanently employed foreign correspondents. Only the largest dailies of the serious press, like *The Times*, *Le Temps* or *Nieuw Rotterdamse Courant*, had several steady correspondents located in the most important European cities, and sometimes in the United States as well.<sup>11</sup> Sending out additional correspondents to cover a war was even more uncommon. Again only the most esteemed dailies could afford to send out correspondents and also felt the need to do this. For many other dailies, sending out war correspondents was overly expensive

<sup>5</sup> Muhlmann, *Political History*, 17.

<sup>6</sup> Elliot, “Professional ideology,” 182.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Muhlmann, *Political History*, 21–28.

<sup>8</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 108–112; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62–66; cf. Kemperink, “Wat wil het naturalisme?,” 50–53.

<sup>9</sup> Philip Knightley, *The first casualty: from the Crimea to Vietnam: the war correspondent as hero, propagandist, and myth maker* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 2–3.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Read, *The Power of News. The History of Reuters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 97–99; Frank van Vree, *Reuters in the Netherlands: De la Mar and Reuters Amsterdam Branch* (London: Reuters, 1993), 17–25; Broersma, “Botsende stijlen,” 60.

<sup>11</sup> Piet Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland. Een persgeschiedenis in portretten* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 2002), 52; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 100–116; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 77–79.

and with the rise of the telegraph they did not always see the need to do this.<sup>12</sup> Especially in the Netherlands, which was not directly involved in most wars in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, dailies seldom hired war reporters and relied on the coverage of foreign papers, news agencies and the occasional report of a soldier who was on the spot.<sup>13</sup>

The First World War proved once again the strong attraction war coverage had on the public. As by this time the mass press had really come into its own, the outbreak of the war brought about an explosion of the newspaper circulation.<sup>14</sup> The demand for accounts about the war was high. Even more so because all the press agencies were based in countries involved in the war and their coverage was therefore strongly curtailed by the respective governments.<sup>15</sup> However, the measures of censorship also made newsgathering a difficult and precarious endeavor for the war reporters of the respective dailies themselves.<sup>16</sup>

Earlier experiences with the coverage of war reporters in respectively the Crimean War (1853-1856), the Boer Wars (1880-1881 and 1899-1902), and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) had made the British and French government weary towards war reporters.<sup>17</sup> William Howard Russell, for instance, who is considered the father of war reporting, bluntly pointed to the ignorance and blunders of the British army in his coverage of the Crimean War for *The Times*, leading to great discontent with British politicians about such impudence.<sup>18</sup> French literary author Jean Tharaud called the war reporters "A nightmare for the army commanders."<sup>19</sup> Since the Netherlands had assumed a neutral position on the world stage it was less directly involved in warfare. For that reason such clashes between government and press about the coverage of the war were more subdued in the Netherlands in this period. Moreover, the political parties had agreed not to jeopardize the neutral position of the Netherlands through their political statements. Due to the pillarized structure of the press landscape the Dutch dailies were intricately connected to party politics and therefore also honored the political agreement on this issue. As a result, they were generally not very oppositional in their coverage of the war.<sup>20</sup>

In both countries the respective governments were concerned with the press revealing important strategic information about the army that could aid the German troops. Moreover, they were also anxious about the impact the news stories from the front could have on the national morale. Such sensitive information might arouse public unrest.<sup>21</sup> National support was necessary in a war, and for that reason 'positive' publicity was a necessity. However, warfare is never a one-sided success. It generally costs many lives on both sides and is accompanied by horrific circumstances and dreadful experiences. Reporters who covered the war truthfully could undercut the heroic image the

<sup>12</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 114-115; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 74-78.

<sup>13</sup> Hagen, *Journalisten*, 54-55; Karskens, *Pleisters*, 14.

<sup>14</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 112; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-118; John McEwen, "The National Press during the First World War: Ownership and Circulation," *Journal of Contemporary History* 17, no.3 (1982): 459, 480-482.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Read, *History of Reuters*, 144-146; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 60; Joan Hemels, *Een journalistiek geheim ontsluit: de Dubbelmonarchie en een geval van dubbele moraal in de Nederlandse pers tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog* (Apeldoorn: Het Spinhuis, 2010), 36-37.

<sup>16</sup> Farrar, *News from the Front*, 6-9; Adrian Gregory, "A Clash of Cultures: The British Press and the Opening of the Great War," in *A Call to Arms: Propaganda, Public Opinion, and Newspapers in the Great War*, ed. Troy Paddock (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 22-24; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-131; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 132; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 222-223; Michael Nolan, "The Eagle Soars over the Nightingale": Press and Propaganda in France in the Opening Months of the Great War," in *A Call to Arms: Propaganda, Public Opinion, and Newspapers in the Great War*, ed. Troy Paddock (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 54-57.

<sup>17</sup> Knightley, *First casualty*, 2-6; cf. Martin, *Grand reporters*, 68-70.

<sup>18</sup> Knightley, *First casualty*, 2-6.

<sup>19</sup> Jean Tharaud cited in: Martin, *Grand reporters*, 68.

<sup>20</sup> Karskens, *Pleisters*, 14-15; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 47.

<sup>21</sup> Forcade, "Voir et dire la guerre à l'heure de la censure (France, 1914-1918)," *Le Temps des médias* 1 (2005): 50-62; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 25; Gregory, "Clash of Cultures," 22-23; Farrar, *News from the Front*, 4.

governments were often aiming for.<sup>22</sup> Especially, the British government had quite some difficulties 'selling' their interference in the war to the public, as they were not under direct attack.<sup>23</sup>

Only days after the outset of the war, France and Great Britain decided to curtail the activities of the press. Lord Kitchener, who had acquired fame during the war in Sudan and the Boer War, was appointed as Secretary of the War in Britain. It was his decision to ban all British correspondents from the frontlines. To replace the work of the correspondents, a press bureau was founded and assigned with the task of diffusing suitable information about the war.<sup>24</sup> Exactly the same happened in France. These press bureaus were the institutions that concerned themselves with the boundaries of what could be published and what not. The rationing of newsprint, because of the paper shortage that arose quickly after the start of the war, also proved a powerful tool in keeping the dailies in line.<sup>25</sup>

Because of their historically less liberal attitude towards press freedom, the French enforced a rather strict policy that entailed pre-censorship. Conversely, the British press bureau formally did not have any power, and was for a large part dependent on the cooperation of the press. Only the incoming and outgoing telegrams could be censored in advance. Although newspapers could voluntarily submit articles to the Press Bureau to see if they were apt to publish, what they actually published was the dailies own responsibility. The government could however call upon the Defense of the Realm Act (DORA), a law that was designed to prevent the leaking of important strategic military information and false reports.

As the Netherlands did not participate in the war, there was no need to censor specific information. Nevertheless, the Dutch government, together with the Dutch press union that agreed with the government on this matter, insistently urged the press to refrain from choosing sides in the newspaper. Inflammatory commentary or partisan reporting was considered dangerous, and could jeopardize Dutch neutrality. In general the Dutch dailies complied with this appeal and maintained a balanced tone. Although a few scholars, like Wolf and Hemels, have pointed to the implicit partiality of certain newspapers, like *Algemeen Handelsblad*, the only daily that clearly took sides was *De Telegraaf*. In part because of the somewhat Francophile owner of the daily, Hak Holdert, the editorial line was overtly anti-German.<sup>26</sup>

The neutral position of the Netherlands did not mean that the Dutch press had full knowledge of and access to the events of the war. They did have at the least the same difficulties as the French and British correspondents in reaching the frontlines. Especially when the battle had moved from the north of Belgium to France, their only visits to the frontlines were always under military escort of one of the countries involved. Still, the freedom of the Dutch dailies made them a highly interesting source of information to their neighboring countries. Not in the least, because they published official press releases from both sides.<sup>27</sup>

However, in all countries there were not that many issues concerning censorship. In practice,

<sup>22</sup> Knightley, *First casualty*, 6-17, 44-47; Karskens, *Pleisters*, 17-22.

<sup>23</sup> Forcade, "Voir et dire," 50-51; Hunt Tooley, *The Western Front: battle ground ground and home front in the First World War* (Houndsmills/Basingstoke/Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 38-39.

<sup>24</sup> Farrar, *News from the Front*, 5; Gregory, "Clash of Cultures," 23; Jeanneney, *Histoire des médias*, 124-125.

<sup>25</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 102; Gregory, "Clash of Cultures," 75; According to Thogmartin dailies could publish four pages for five days a week, and two days a week they could only publish two. A quick glance in *Gallica*, the electronic archive of the *Bibliothèque Nationale Française*, however shows that the impact of this shortage differed. *Le Matin* and *Le Petit Parisien*, consisting of between six and eight pages before the war, published only two pages throughout almost the entire month of August 1914, whereas *Le Figaro* kept publishing between four and six pages in the same period. This is probably related to the considerable difference in circulation between these papers as *Le Figaro* only had a circulation of about 50.000 copies.

<sup>26</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 123-131; Paul Moeyes, *Buiten schot. Nederland tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog 1914-1918* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 2001), 219-223; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 132; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 48-52.

<sup>27</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 129; Maartje Abbenhuis, *The art of staying neutral: the Netherlands in the First World War, 1914-1918* (Amsterdam: AUP, 2006), 172-173.

dailies self-censored the articles they published and only a few articles caused problems during the entire period of the war.<sup>28</sup> Like a large part of the population, journalists expressed their support for the national cause. For that reason they were not unwilling to listen to the pleas of the government and military to withhold the publication of strategic military information in their newspapers. Still, the press resented the government and military for their far-reaching decisions to curtail the press, which were taken without any consultation. They were appalled by the lack of confidence in the responsibility of the press that was communicated through these decisions. The dailies depended on news and profited from interesting disclosures, and the journalists felt frustrated that they could not go where they wanted and were annoyed by the lack and delays of the provision of 'hard news'.<sup>29</sup> However, the British and French censorship measures could not prevent that adventurous correspondents - especially during the first months - still managed to reach or come close to the front lines. Moreover, although the reporters could not witness as many actual battles as they would have liked, they still regularly published news about the war-struck environment of Belgium and France.

Several French and British scholars argue that the credibility of the press has gotten a severe blow in this period, because of the docile attitude of the press with regard to the measures of censorship. From this perspective, the press willingly withheld information and presented the readership with an overly optimistic, heroic and patriotic image of the war as a military success with victory within reach, which was quickly unmasked as propaganda by the public.<sup>30</sup> This perspective oversimplifies the situation, and especially the claim with regard to the effect on the public is in my opinion hard to assess precisely. It assumes a perfectly working censorship, a neutral public that was used to balanced and independent coverage, and a clear knowledge of the way the war would develop. In reality it took a while before the restrictive measures were in place, and they were not full proof.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, many dailies performed some sort of self-censorship as they advocated a patriotic perspective on the war. A patriotic editorial line had proven an important discursive strategy to attract readership.<sup>32</sup> This was partly the result of an honest and heartfelt patriotism that lived among the population and therefore also among many editors and journalists.<sup>33</sup> Thus, censorship was certainly not the only factor that determined in the patriotic nature of the papers' coverage.<sup>34</sup> In addition, for quite some time it remained unclear how long the war would take and many people genuinely believed it to be over in a few months.<sup>35</sup> This is not to say that there was no 'reality gap', but it shows that the causes of this gap are more complex than often suggested, and therefore might have had less impact on the public opinion. This is supported by the fact that the general circulation of the press did not decrease and that of the popular dailies even increased substantially during and right after the war. This indicates that the credibility of the newspaper did not deteriorate as quickly and severely as these scholars have suggested.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Gregory, "Clash of Cultures," 22-24; Lovelace, "British press censorship," 307-310; Nolan, "Press and Propaganda," 67; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 27.

<sup>29</sup> Lovelace, "British press censorship," 308-309, 315-317; Nolan, "Press and Propaganda," 55-57; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 30-31.

<sup>30</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 112-118; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 35; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 221; Farrar, *News from the Front*, xvi; Lovelace, "British press censorship," 307-319; Nolan, "Press and Propaganda," 57-58.

<sup>31</sup> Forcade, "Voir et dire," 50-57; Gregory, "Clash of Cultures," 22-25.

<sup>32</sup> Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 144-147; cf. Chalaby, "No Ordinary Press Owners," 621-641.

<sup>33</sup> Tooley, *Western Front*, 41-42.

<sup>34</sup> Gregory, "Clash of Cultures," 31-39; Nolan, "Press and Propaganda," 52-57.

<sup>35</sup> Ian Becket, *The Great War, 1914-1918* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 55-61.

<sup>36</sup> Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 229-231, 311-314; Micheline Dupuy, *Le Petit Parisien. "Le plus fort tirage des journaux du monde entier"* (Paris: Plon, 1989), 105-118.

## Witnessing war

War coverage in general is widely considered to have given a strong impulse to reporting.<sup>37</sup> Yet, the perspective on the journalistic development during the First World War is dominated by the issue of censorship rather than its impact on the development of reporting. The most attention has been devoted to the way censorship was organized, to questions about its efficiency, and to its impact on the (lack of) truthfulness of the news. Research into the French and British press during this period emphasizes the partisan, propagandistic, and generally untruthful image of the war that was given by the press, whereas many Dutch scholars point to the general compliance of the Dutch press with the neutral line the government wanted them to take.<sup>38</sup>

This focus on censorship and propaganda, and veracity and accuracy has obscured the attention for any other aspects of journalism during this period in the countries at hand. Only a few - mainly Dutch - scholars have broadened the perspective on this period in journalism history and have pointed to the impulses the First World War has given to the development of journalism. They argue that the First World War can be seen as a hinge point in journalism history. By the start of the First World War dailies sent out reporters to cover the war *in situ* on a larger scale than in the wars before.<sup>39</sup> However, the restrictive measures, together with the lack of trustworthy news from the news agencies on which most papers had always relied on heavily, presented journalists with problems obtaining trustworthy information. For the first time, they were really thrown upon their own resources. As a result, the First World War was a period in which the spiking demand for news and the sudden installment of censorship raised the awareness of journalists that they could not rely anymore on the official instances for trustworthy information. Consequently, they had to rely on their own newsgathering routines, in which on-site reporting got a more prominent position. This offered an important impulse for the further development and diffusion of active reporting routines and the accompanying forms like the interview and the reportage. However, the experience with the subjective and sometimes fictionalized eyewitness accounts incited a debate about the reliability of newsgathering routines and trustworthy ways of presenting newsworthy information, which influenced the further development of journalistic discourse.<sup>40</sup>

Especially the reportage as a genre is intricately related to the rise of war reporting.<sup>41</sup> The many wars that were fought in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century meant that by the outbreak of the First World War the readership had grown accustomed to war. However, for most of them the actual experience of warfare was something alien. In order to make their readers grasp the events and the atmosphere of the war, the reporters needed to convey what it meant to experience warfare. Next to providing the public with accounts of the bigger picture of movements and battles of the army, reporters needed to supply their audience with a vicarious experience of what partaking in or being a victim of the war exactly entailed. This made these international conflicts and often complex military battles somewhat more tangible.<sup>42</sup> The public demand for authentic stories about the war provided the dailies with a strong incentive to send reporters over to the battlefields as they needed to be present and witness the warfare themselves to be able to convey an authentic experience.

<sup>37</sup> Zelizer, "On 'having been there,'" 415; Karmasin et.al. "Preface," ix-x.

<sup>38</sup> Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 41-61; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 123-131; Moeyes, *Buiten schot*, 219-223; for an analysis that argues that the position of the different dailies was not as neutral as is often claimed, cf. Hemels, *Journalistiek geheim*, 28-31, 49-66, 70-90, 111-122.

<sup>39</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-120; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 34.

<sup>40</sup> Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 40-68; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-131; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 132; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 159, 170-171; cf. Zelizer, "On 'having been there,'" 415-416.

<sup>41</sup> Knightley, *First casualty*, 1-10; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 49-52, 56-72; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 59, 117-122; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 61-64; cf. Karskens, *Pleisters*, 57-58.

<sup>42</sup> Knightley, *First casualty*, 8-9.

For these reasons the reportage became an important genre in the coverage of the First World War.<sup>43</sup> Scrutinizing this genre can therefore shed more light on the development of the active reporting routines in this period and the journalistic standards it had to live up to.

The characteristics of the reportages published in the different national dailies show certain differences, which point to diverging conceptions of journalism. In his work on war reporting Knightley makes a distinction between two types of reportages. In the first type the reporter aims to describe the general proceedings of the battle, whereas in the second type the general events are told by zooming in on the people involved.<sup>44</sup> This is related to a difference in focus of the reportages. Some focus on the military proceedings, whereas others adopt a more human interest approach to the war. The British reportages tend to move towards the first type, whereas the Dutch and French reportages are closest to the second type.<sup>45</sup>

This distinction links up to the stronger orientation of French and, to a lesser extent, Dutch journalism on literary discourse, in which the realistic and naturalistic tradition played an important role.<sup>46</sup> The reportages written in this tradition aimed to capture reality by textually representing all the sensory and emotional experiences a certain event brought about. For that reason, the authors of these reportages employ a large set of narrative means that were considered to be typically literary.<sup>47</sup>

In Britain, literature did not offer the same source of inspiration for journalism. Journalism was in the course of demarcating itself from other cultural domains by developing its own specific discourse. Chalaby's argument that journalism and literature quickly had become separated in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century disregards the gradual pace of this process, and oversimplifies the relation between the journalistic and literary field.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, his claim that the mediating subjectivity of the reporter is replaced by factual objective reporting, does not distinguish well-enough between the subjective nature of any form of description and the subjective nature of reasoning. In other words, Chalaby conflates personally colored observation and opinionated argumentation.<sup>49</sup> For this reason his analysis of the development of journalism lacks the nuance to elucidate the differences in the development of journalism in the three countries.<sup>50</sup>

In the prewar period, British journalism displays a first step towards a less subjective way of describing observation. The British reporters recount the events they witnessed in a more matter-of-fact style than the Dutch and French reportages. Yet, in this early period the British reportages evidently demonstrate the organizing hand of the reporter and overtly show that the factual information is still clearly rooted in the subjective experience of the reporter. As the next chapters show, this matter-of-fact style of writing can be seen as a first step towards the disconnection of factual information from subjective experience that would eventually become ingrained in the reporting process. Conversely, factual reporting in France and the Netherlands maintained its emphasis on subjective on-site observations. As I will discuss in the next chapters, with regard to

43 Cf. Farrar, *News from the Front*, 6-9; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 159; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 62-63.

44 Knightley, *First casualty*, 8-9.

45 Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 58-60; Walter Redfern, *Writing on the Move. Albert Londres and Investigative Journalism* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004), 32-33.

46 Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-65; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 45-48; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 49-55, 77-92.

47 Cf. Kemperink, "Wat wil het naturalisme?," 42-52; Ton Anbeek, "Kenmerken van de Nederlandse naturalistische roman," *De Nieuwe Taalgids* 72, no.6 (1979): 529-530.

48 Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 313-318; Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 166-167; Cf. Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, xi-xix; Chalaby's remark that Charles Dickens was the only British writer who worked in journalism disregards the complexity of the relation between journalism and literature, which also manifests the contribution of occasional essays and serials by literary authors. He forgets authors like H.G. Wells, Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene.

49 Although Chalaby does distinguish between the two levels of subjectivity, he presents them as inextricably tied together and in his further analysis leaves the distinction aside, cf. Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 128-133.

50 Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*. 128-130.

British and French journalism these divergent perspectives on journalism practice led to a different perspective of the role of opinion within journalism.

## The reporters, their social environment and their reportages

The divergence between British and continental journalism is rooted in the disparities between the cultural position and self-image of the reporters in the respective countries, warranting a more detailed cross-national analysis. Scrutinizing the reportages about the First World War in the different countries elucidates these diverging conceptions of journalism in more detail. For that reason, I have analyzed a selection of war reportages from every country, and compared their textual characteristics - like perspective, tone, integration of sources, direct quotes or dialogue, use of imagery, reflection, and composition - to see what the key features of the genre are in the different countries in this period and which discursive norms these texts embody. I have focused on influential reporters who have played a central role in the coverage of the war in the respective countries. Because the previous chapter, supported by prior research, has shown that the new journalistic routines and forms, like the reportage, played the most important role in the popular papers, I have focused on these dailies.<sup>51</sup> By comparing this type of newspaper, the range and possible differences in textual features can be analyzed most fruitfully.

Analyzing the coverage throughout the entire war was impossible within the time frame of this thesis. I have therefore focused on the initial phase of the war in 1914, because at that time the armies of the different countries were still on the move, whereas by the end of 1914 a stalemate position was reached on the Western front. The first months of the war were also the only ones in which the Dutch reporters could reach the front and cover the war as the German army invaded Belgium close to the Dutch-Belgian border on its way to France.<sup>52</sup> In this period, the border regions in the Netherlands indirectly felt some of the consequences of the war, because they were flooded with - mostly Belgian - refugees. Around October, when Antwerp was besieged by the Germans, certain Dutch villages almost doubled their number of inhabitants.<sup>53</sup> This period was clearly the most newsworthy for the Dutch press. More importantly, in this initial period of the war, government censorship was still in the course of being organized and reporters were still able to move around the different battlefields. After the movement of the armies had become more or less stagnant the battlefields were generally sealed off and off limits for reporters.<sup>54</sup> In addition, although the First World War consisted of an Eastern and a Western front, I have only focused on the coverage of the latter. The Western front attracted most of the public's attention in the three respective countries. These battlegrounds were closer to home for the British and the French, and the French and British armies were most actively engaged there. The battles on the Western front also impacted the Netherlands the strongest as several crucial battles were fought close to the Belgian-Dutch border. This meant that the flow of information was almost entirely controlled by the respective governments, which was reinforced by the decision of the French and British government to appoint several official war correspondents. These reporters were the only ones allowed to cover the war, and were kept on a very tight leash. Overall, in the initial months of the war, on-site reporting was still possible, and news from the

<sup>51</sup> Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xix; Wolf, "Anglo-American Newspaper," 86-90; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 115-148; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 101-104; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 58-60, 170-172; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 5-9, 19, 30-39.

<sup>52</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 120, 128; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 63; Moeyes, *Buiten schot*, 219-223.

<sup>53</sup> Evelyn de Roodt, "Reacties van Nederlanders op vluchtelingen tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog," in *Leven naast de catastrofe. Nederland tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog*, ed. Hans Binnenveld et al. (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2001), 51-53.

<sup>54</sup> Knightley, *First casualty*, 99; Farrar, *News from the Front*, 13.

front was still fresh and novel. Later on, especially after the stalemate was reached, news about the war had become a daily routine of censored information provided by the official instanced, which resulted in fewer firsthand accounts.<sup>55</sup>

For every country I have analyzed the accounts about the war of one or two reporters. The two selected reporters in Britain are two of the few official war correspondents in that period. George Ward Price (1886-1961) and William Beach Thomas (1868-1957) both worked as correspondent for the *Daily Mail* and were sent to France at the onset of the war. Together with Hamilton Fyfe, J.M.N. Jeffries, Frederic William Wyle - who was a correspondent in Germany - and a few others, they determined the image of the war as it was presented in the *Mail*. In the first months of the war, when they could still move around quite a bit, Ward Price and Beach Thomas covered the events of the war in the north of France and the south of Belgium. They were considered two of the most important and esteemed reporters of that moment, and were knighted for their journalistic efforts during the war. Just like other war correspondents, Ward Price and Beach Thomas also wrote short news reports and more extensive reflective articles, like analyses of the war and opinionated editorials on the leader page, next to their reportages. Both of them can be regarded as prime examples of journalists whose articles show the first phase in the transformation from reflective to event-centered journalism.<sup>56</sup> For this case study I have analyzed 40 reportages of the both reporters.

The British war reporters have not received much scholarly attention. As a result, what is known about them and their careers comes mostly from their own memoirs. Both Beach Thomas and Ward Price had started their career in journalism while they were studying at respectively Oxford and Cambridge. After a disappointing career as a teacher, Beach Thomas had made the switch to journalism in 1899.<sup>57</sup> He first worked more or less freelance for many different papers and weeklies, before he was hired by Northcliffe in 1907 to become a reporter with the *Daily Mail*. He wrote weekly columns about the countryside for the *Mail*, before he was sent to France as a war reporter.<sup>58</sup> Ward Price, a rather poor student on a scholarship who could hardly make ends meet, turned to journalism to supplement his modest income. In 1908 he sent a letter to the editor of the *Daily Mail* to see if they were interested in stories about his intended travels across Europe. Tom Marlowe, the editor-in-chief, was not interested in these travel stories, but did give him a freelance job as a reporter. This was quickly turned into a five years contract, after which Ward Price would become one of the star reporters of the daily. He was sent to Berlin, Turkey and France before he became one of the five official British war correspondents during the First World War.<sup>59</sup>

Both men entered journalism as it was transforming to a more commercial and professional occupation. The technological innovation, together with the strong commercialization of the British Press, had put the rapid distribution of newsworthy information accessible for people of all dispositions high on the agenda. Moreover, the rather large editorial staff of the British newspapers was in the course of replacing the individual voice of a stylistically gifted reporter with a more broadly shared perfunctory and plane way of writing. Newspaper owners and editors felt this was a necessary development in order to keep all the different journalists in check.<sup>60</sup> As both Beach Thomas

55 Farrar, *News from the Front*, 12-13, 32-35, 41, 66-71; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-122; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 132-133, 156-158; Naud, *Profession reporter*, 29; J. Lee Thompson, *Politicians, the Press, & Propaganda. Lord Northcliffe & The Great War, 1914-1919* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1999), 26.

56 Cf. Farrar, *News from the Front*, ix-xi, 2-7; Thompson, *Politicians, the Press, & Propaganda*, 23, 36; Sally Taylor, *The Great Outsiders. Northcliffe, Rothermere and the Daily Mail* (London: Times Newspapers United, 1996), 150; William Beach Thomas, *The Way of a Countryman* (London: Michael Joseph, 1944), 102-103.

57 Beach Thomas, *Countryman*, 44-49.

58 William Beach Thomas, *A Traveller in News* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1925) 1-2, 19-55.

59 George Ward Price, *Extra-Special Correspondent* (London: George G. Harrap & Co, 1957), 13-15.

60 Cf. Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 163-167; Elliott, "Professional ideology," 186-188.



and Ward Price acknowledged, the editor and the sub-editor were becoming increasingly important to keep the uniformity newspaper's presentation of the news.<sup>61</sup> Thus, the autonomy of the reporter was diminishing and the news room was slowly structured to accommodate a more hierarchically monitored production process. However, at the start of their careers, Beach Thomas and Ward Price were still part of an environment in which artists, intellectuals, politicians and journalists moved in the same circles. They reflect on the many scholars, intellectual and men of letters that were hired as editors-in-chief or reporters. The ease with which they could crossover in these other fields was on the verge of changing, but in the period just before and during the war journalism, the connection between these fields was not severed yet and individual reporters maintained a large autonomy over their writings. Both Ward Price and Beach Thomas talk about a form of the 'old-style independent war correspondent', whose days were gradually fading in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As Ward Price puts it both men got into journalism in its best years: "The first decade of the twentieth century was the Golden Age of journalism, more individualistic and less mechanized than newspaper work today."<sup>62</sup> Thus, the division of labor that is considered a typical characteristic of the objectivity regime, and that played an important part in the development towards clearly demarcating journalism practice from politics and literature, was not yet in place. British journalism was only taking the first steps in this process of adopting this particular professional framework and was therefore not all that different from French and Dutch journalism as Chalaby has argued.<sup>63</sup>

In the Netherlands and France journalism crossing over from one domain to the other was still in full swing, and literary discourse kept on shaping journalism practice. The perfect example of this is Albert Londres (1884-1932), who is considered to be the embodiment of the *grand reporter*. He is considered to be one of France's greatest war correspondents among other renowned reporters, like Pierre Giffard, Ludovic Naudeau, Edouard Helsey, André Tardieu, Gaston de Maizières, Paul Ginisty, and Jean LeFranc. Londres' account of the devastation of the cathedral of Rheims is arguably the most famous French reportage about World War I.<sup>64</sup> With his way of reporting he set an example that influenced the professional development of journalism in France. Londres spent his life as a reporter traveling all over the world to cover war, colonial regimes, foreign cultures, and social wrongs. However, he stated at several occasions that his work as a *grand reporter* was not his prime goal, but rather a means to an end; it enabled him to roam the world. Londres was part of a social circle consisting of literary bohemians who cultivated the romantic image of the artist. Among his close friends were Charles Dullin, who was to become a famous actor, Henri Beraud, who became a successful novelist and journalist, and the painter Georges Rouquayrol. Following in the footsteps of romantic authors like Victor Hugo, Londres always stated that he traveled essentially for the sake of traveling.<sup>65</sup> The reportage was nothing more than "a way to satisfy my vice", which was "the journey for the sake of the journey, the new for the sake of the new, even if the country you will see tomorrow cannot live up to the previous."<sup>66</sup>

Clearly Londres was inspired by literature, like many of his colleagues in journalism.<sup>67</sup> The distinction between journalistic work and literature was still not very clear in that period, which relates

<sup>61</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 147; Beach Thomas, *Countryman*, 52; cf. Ward Price, *Extra-Special Correspondent*, 19.

<sup>62</sup> Ward Price, *Extra-Special Correspondent*, 19.

<sup>63</sup> Beach Thomas, *Countryman*, 49-58, 65-72; Ward Price, *Extra-Special Correspondent*, 15-19; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 310-318.

<sup>64</sup> Pierre Assouline, *Albert Londres. Vie et mort d'un grand reporter 1884-1932* (Paris: Balland, 1989), 11-16, 78; Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 12, 21; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 160-163.

<sup>65</sup> Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 27-35; Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 11-22.

<sup>66</sup> Cited in Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 14 [Originally cited in Francis Lacassin, "Au pays des grands reporters, Albert Londres," *Griegoire*, 19 July (1929)].

<sup>67</sup> Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 49-57.

to the way Denis Ruellan has characterized French journalism as *le professionnalisme du flou*. The latter argues that journalism in France is typified by its fuzzy delineation in relation to other cultural modes of expression, like literature.<sup>68</sup> This relates to the fact that the collections of reportages of Londres were often categorized as novels (*romans*).<sup>69</sup> In France the reportage was considered to be the genre that was as close to literature as journalism could ever be.

The French for their part do not consider the reportage to be an exact science, built from pieces of reality in their raw state. Seen from Paris, it passes as a literary genre, an actual extension in the press of what naturalism has attempted in the novel. Its artisans are the grandsons of Michelet, the sons of Hugo and the brothers of Zola, following a refined method.<sup>70</sup>

His accounts, of which I have analyzed the first consecutive 24 until Londres traveled to the Eastern Front, therefore elucidate the way event-centered reporting was fused to a literary orientation.

Before Londres became a full-time *grand reporter*, he published several volumes of poetry. He always kept on writing poetry until he died in a ship wreck returning from one of his trips, taking his unpublished poetry with him.<sup>71</sup> To earn a living during his days as newly aspiring artist, Londres started out as a parliamentary reporter for *Le Matin* in 1910. On a daily basis he wrote impressionistic pieces about the coming and goings of the politicians in Paris. As one of the four largest papers, *Le Matin* belonged to the best-selling dailies in France with a daily circulation of approximately 900,000 copies around 1914.<sup>72</sup> When the paper was founded by the American Samuel Chamberlain, it was oriented on American journalism, professing to be a non-political, non-literary newspaper that focused mainly on bringing news.<sup>73</sup> However, this formula failed to catch on, and only after replacing the old editor-in-chief with a new one, who fused the initial orientation on news to the national journalistic tradition with its stronger orientation on literary discourse, *Le Matin* developed into the successful paper it had become by 1914.<sup>74</sup>

When the war broke loose, Londres was waiting for a chance to prove himself as a reporter. *Le Matin* immediately sent correspondents to cover the war, but Londres had to remain in Paris initially and cover parliament. However, when the daily got word that the German army was close to Rheims and found out that they had no established reporters to send over, editor-in-chief Bunau-Varilla decided to give Londres a shot.<sup>75</sup> During the first months of the war Londres traveled across the French-Belgian frontlines and reported on the events of the war. Like the rest of the French newspapers, the daily was generally very compliant with regard to government censorship and self-censored their reports. Nevertheless, in this initial period, Londres managed to get around quite a lot, and witnessed important moments of the war, establishing himself as one of the most important reporters of his time, always operating on intersection of journalism and literature.<sup>76</sup>

To a lesser extent this also applied to the Dutch press in this period. The reportages in this period find their inspiration in realistic and naturalistic novelists and employ similar textual characteristics to evoke an authentic experience. However, as Wijfjes suggests, the literary ambitions and inspi-

68 Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 29-30.

69 Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 210-211.

70 Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 71.

71 Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 560; Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 23-25.

72 Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 92-95; Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 62; Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 38.

73 Dominique Pinsolle, "Le Matin, les affaires et la politique, 1884-1897," *Le Mouvement Social* 232 (2010): 91-93.

74 Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 36-39.

75 Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 71-77.

76 Nolan, "Press and Propaganda," 55-57; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 102-103.

rations of the reporter should never take away from the main task of journalism to provide a clear picture of reality. Thus, the Dutch reporters considered the narrative means a way to assist them in conveying reality, but literary quality was never a goal in itself.<sup>77</sup>

Several Dutch reporters, like Frans Netscher, Bernard Canter, and Rie Brusse, published both reportages and literary works, and like in France both domains were closely aligned. Among these reporters were also Louis Pissuisse (1880-1927) and Johan Luger (1887-1964). The war accounts of both reporters are able to illustrate which characteristics signal a trustworthy reporting practice. Pissuisse combined journalism with his work as a cabaret artist for quite some time - he has been characterized as one of the founding fathers of Dutch cabaret. When he turned twenty, Pissuisse moved to Amsterdam and started working for *Algemeen Handelsblad*. Between 1903 and 1906 he was their foreign correspondent in London. On his return, he became a star reporter by writing a reportage series, for which he and his partner-in-crime, Max Blokzijl, traveled through the Netherlands disguised as street musicians. The reportages he wrote are characterized by their adventurous nature and their experimentation with the form.<sup>78</sup> The success of these accounts made him decide to combine his work as a journalist and a cabaret artist and travel across the world in which journalism became of secondary importance. However, the start of the First World War made Pissuisse decide to put his career as a cabaret artist on hold and return to his old occupation as a journalist.<sup>79</sup>

Johan Luger (1887-1964) fits a similar profile. He started working for *De Telegraaf* in 1913 as an art critic. Drawn to the heroic image of war reporting, his reportages about the battles close to the Belgian-Dutch border laid the foundation for his later status of star reporter of the daily. After the war, he kept on writing reportages and wrote popular columns under the alias 'Pasquino'. He also became a successful novelist and author of children's literature.<sup>80</sup>

These two reporters in the service of *De Telegraaf* belong to the few journalists who witnessed actual battles during the first months of the war. Like most other large national dailies, *De Telegraaf* immediately sent several reporters to Belgium to cover the German invasion of Belgium.<sup>81</sup> Notorious for its obstinate behavior with regard to the established norms and values in journalism, owner Hak Holdert made clear to his staff that the editorial line of *De Telegraaf* was anti-German.<sup>82</sup> This manifested itself the strongest in the editorials by J.C Schröder, also known as Barbarossa, who was even incarcerated for a short period for threatening the Netherlands' neutral position. The initial reportages on the war however are not as strongly anti-German. They are very sympathetic to the civilians that suffer from the war and, certainly in the first months, the Germans are portrayed as being kind, well organized, and polite.<sup>83</sup> Pissuisse only worked as a war correspondent in the first month of the war, but during this period, while traveling through Belgium, mostly around Liège, he witnessed the downfall of the city after being besieged by the Germans. Luger also roamed the northern part of Belgium, close to the Dutch border and at several occasions encountered the German army.<sup>84</sup> Like the British reporters, they also contributed short news reports to the newspaper. For this case study, I have analyzed a total of 17 accounts of the both reporters.

<sup>77</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-63.

<sup>78</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 59-60, 70.

<sup>79</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 132-133; Wim Ibo, "Pissuisse, Jean Louis (1880-1927)," in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* [URL: [www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn2/pissuisse](http://www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn2/pissuisse)]; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 70.

<sup>80</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 76, 132-133.

<sup>81</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 120.

<sup>82</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 66-69, 124-126.

<sup>83</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 141-142.

<sup>84</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 132-133.

## 1914: the German invasion of Belgium and the north of France

The outbreak of the war took the British, Dutch and French press somewhat by surprise. They had not anticipated the escalation of the conflict. In Britain the press was focused on the uproars in Ireland, concerning their wish for home rule. And in France attention was centered on the assassination of Gaston Calmette, the editor-in-chief of *Le Figaro*, who had been shot by the second wife of the conservative politician Joseph Cailleux, member of the Radical Republican party.<sup>85</sup> Nonetheless, the dailies of the respective countries responded quickly and sent reporters to the front to cover the war.

The direct event that led to World War I was the assassination of the archduke of Austria, Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary on 28th of June 1914. He was killed by Bosnian nationalist Gavrilo Princip, who was aided by a Serbian extreme-nationalist organization called the 'Black Hand'. Supported by Germany, Austria-Hungary gave Serbia a rather bold and demanding ultimatum, which entailed either war or their full cooperation in the investigation of the murder, an immediate halt to the propaganda campaign against Austria-Hungary, and the extradition of several Serbian military officers who were to be trialed in Austria-Hungary. Serbia, having an alliance with Russia, which in turn had an alliance with France, declined, and on 28 July 1914 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

Germany, which was afraid of being caught in a trap between a Russian and a French attack, had already come up with a plan, devised by general Von Schlieffen, to prevent this, and set it into action. This so called *Schlieffenplan* entailed a swift defeat of France by a surprise-attack through (in the final version only) Belgium, and an attack from the eastern border of France around the Lorraine and the Alsace.<sup>86</sup> This meant that the Netherlands, which had proclaimed their neutrality, was left untouched by the war. That their neutrality was respected had much to do with the German decision to deviate from the initial *Schlieffenplan*, in which their army would also invade the Netherlands on their way to the northern French border. In the end General Von Moltke, who had the main command of the army, decided that it would be faster if they did not need not deal with the resistance of another army. This decision kept the Netherlands out of the German's strategic equation. Nonetheless, the Netherlands did put everything to work to maintain their neutrality during the war.<sup>87</sup>

According to the definitive strategic plan, the French army would be crushed between attacks coming from the north and the east. France would be defeated before Russia had fully mobilized. However, the resistance of Belgium and France was much stronger than hoped for. Instead of a quick victory, the invasion of France through Belgium led to a static trench war that would last four years, and cost the lives of roughly ten million people. The different parts of the battling armies formed a frontline from the South of Flanders to the West of France, along which the reporters tried to travel - as hard as that was - to report on the proceedings of the war.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Thompson, *Politicians, the Press, & Propaganda*, 13-20; Nolan, "Press and Propaganda," 53-54; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117.

<sup>86</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the *Schlieffenplan*, cf. Gerd Krumeich, "The War Imagined: 1890-1914," in *A companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 6-9; Becket, *The Great War*, 61-66.

<sup>87</sup> For more information about the different aspects of Dutch neutrality, cf. Ismee Tames, *Oorlog voor onze gedachten. Oorlog, neutraliteit en identiteit in het Nederlandse publieke debat, 1914-1918* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2006); Abbenhuis, *Staying Neutral*.

<sup>88</sup> Tooley, *The Western Front*, 4-7, 35-40, 263; Holger Herwig, "War in the West, 1914-1916," in *A companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 49-52.

## The narrative characteristics of the reportages

To most of the newspaper readership the war was highly interesting as it directly or indirectly intervened in their everyday reality, but at the same time it remained a rather abstract event. The reporters thus had the task to bring the war at the doorsteps of their audience. They tried to convey its different aspects by presenting the reality of the battles and the experience of living in a war-struck environment in a truthful way. In their reportages the reporters made different choices with regard to their presentation, which relates to the debate about what a truthful account entailed. Their on-site presence emphasized the trustworthiness of the account, but pointed to the subjectivity of the accounts as well.<sup>89</sup> The reporters explored the different ways to represent reality, ranging from portraying reality in a concise and matter-of-fact manner, refraining from too many subjective elements, and aiming to restage the events they witnessed, drawing reality closer by using evocative narrative strategies to represent an authentic experience. Examining the textual characteristics the reporters used to shape their stories provides an interesting insight in the way journalism was conceptualized and practiced in the different countries. The following analysis shows that the British, Dutch and French reportages for the most part have the same toolbox of storytelling techniques and stylistic devices, like the use of a first person perspective, the representation of dialogue, the use of imagery, and building tension, but diverge in the degree to which they are exploited by the reporters in the different countries.

### Covering the war

With the armies spreading rapidly through Belgium and France, the war reporters felt they needed to be everywhere at the same time. In their attempt to follow different army divisions they traveled back and forth and were occupied with describing the different aspects of the war. The reporters basically gathered their information by inspecting the environment where the war was taking place in person, and by talking to whoever could provide them with interesting information - in the course of all of this they were continuously struggling with the hindrances that were set in place by the government in cooperation with the military. Both observing and interviewing, two important aspects of active reporting, form important elements of the reportages. Their accounts constantly include quotes from the people they consulted. In certain cases entire dialogues, in which the contributions of the reporter are also represented, are often part of the reportages. Pisuissé's reportages for instance are full of conversations. The integration of the Belgian dialect shows how close Pisuissé tried to stay to reality.

En dat alles, doordat een kleine jongen van den herbergier aan den secretaris van de gemeente was komen vertellen:

“Bi oens in 't stamenee, twee spionnen.”

- “Hoe wee-de-zij dat het spionnen sun”

- “Ze klappen zoo vies.” (Ze spreken zoo raar).<sup>90</sup>

The difference between representing quotes to attribute the information to a source, adding to the transparency and trustworthiness of the account, and the integration of whole conversations to evoke the authentic feel of the account is fuzzy in these accounts. This suggests that integrating quotes and dialogues not only refers to the routine of interviewing people to elicit information, but

<sup>89</sup> Zelizer, “On “having been there,”” 408-428.

<sup>90</sup> Jean Louis Pisuissé, “De krijgsbedrijven te land,” *De Telegraaf*, August 18, 1914; for an English translation, see Appendix II.

is also a way to convey an authentic experience, which was an important characteristic aspect of naturalistic or realistic prose.<sup>91</sup>

Examining the reportages shows that the Dutch, but especially the British reporters, have a stronger focus on the delivery of straightforward information. The reportages of Ward Price and Beach Thomas contain a lot of plain description of the events they witnessed, full of detailed factual depictions of the battles and the battlegrounds for instance.

In the morning we visited the battlefield. It was sufficiently conspicuous, thanks to seven German caissons left on the field; but for the rest nature was covering up the traces with strange completeness and speed. Yet even without a guide you could have reconstructed much of the scene and detected the tactical ingenuity of the German colonel. The ground had been dug in three patterns. A shallow pit of wide dimensions surrounded by a low ridge of earth marked the position of the big guns.<sup>92</sup>

The Dutch reportages consist of many of such descriptive parts as well:

There lay a black pontoon bridge over the river at Lixhe. Since the afternoon heavy clouds of smoke rise up again from the side of Berneau. Belgian soldiers came fleeing over the border at Eysden. The *luiker neerderfort* [a fortress in Liege, FH] has been silenced. A zeppelin flew over and dropped bombs on it.<sup>93</sup>

Beach Thomas and Ward Price also occasionally put their observations into a larger perspective about the general movements of the battling armies.

The German retreat has not gone far before the enemy has had to make a stand. Falling back at the end of last week from Châlons and Eprenay through Rheims, the Germans have turned to bay along the ridge of a line of low, wooded hills to the north-east of the last town. This point, where they are occupying the sites of the old dismantled forts of Rheims and are furiously bombarding the unfortified town, regardless of the rules of warfare, is the center and key of their position. To the west of it their right lies on the Aisne, and there they were being vigorously attacked yesterday by the Allies from the direction of Soissons; on the east of Rheims they hold the wooded crests of the low hills that stretch towards the forest of the Argonne.<sup>94</sup>

The emphasis on the provision of factual information focusing on the tactical movements of the armies and their encounters on the battle fields is thus an important element in the Dutch and British reportages. This type of straightforward description is an example of presenting information in a way that is more or less cut off from the experience of the reporter. Although these reportages also contain more colored and subjective elements, such passages suggest a move in the direction of a more detached form of reporting.<sup>95</sup>

This does not mean that Londres' reportage did not provide newsworthy information or that it

91 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-64; Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 213; Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 143-144; Høyer, "Rumours of Modernity," 34-35.

92 William Beach Thomas, "The battle on the hill," *Daily Mail*, October 12, 1914.

93 Johan Luger, "Een tocht door het Luiksche," *De Telegraaf*, August 7, 1914.

94 George Ward Price, "Battle seen from Rheims cathedral," *Daily Mail*, September 19, 1914.

95 Cf. Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvii-xix; Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 129.

did not contain such straightforward pieces of reporting. However, such elements are less prominent, and certainly not characteristic of his reportages. In part because his country is struck the hardest, he focuses more on the impact the war has on society and the everyday lives of the French population, and certainly diverges in the way he treats the material for his reportages.

## Evoking an experience: perspective, imagery, personification, reflection

The reportages about the war are mostly written from an overt first person perspective - in the case of Albert Londres the first person plural (*nous*) is used, as he often traveled together with a photographer or a sketch artist.<sup>96</sup> In the reportages the reader almost always sees the event through the eyes of the reporter in question.<sup>97</sup> Above everything else, personally witnessing the events was considered of imperative importance by all reporters. This is reinforced by the emphasis on and allusions to the different sensory experiences, which is a typical strategy to convey an experience.<sup>98</sup> The following description of the warfare illustrates this very well (I have put certain words in italics to show their emphasis on the sensory impression).

Across us the shells struggled through the air with the *noise* one would expect of a very sharp instrument cutting metal. Across the next field began the *rattle* of the musketry where some of the French carabineers were hidden. [...] After a few minutes the Germans began to reply with their favorite *instrument*, the mitrailleuse, *tap-tap-tap*, like a carpenter in a hurry.<sup>99</sup>

Clearly the organizing principle of the accounts is the “mediating subjectivity of the reporter”, which goes against Chalaby’s argument that British journalism fully subscribed to the objectivity regime in that period.<sup>100</sup>

Moreover, the reporters often explicitly emphasize their presence to grant their story more credibility.<sup>101</sup> The integration of such a meta-perspective suggests that on-site reporting was not yet common practice.<sup>102</sup> By emphasizing their presence as an eyewitness, the reporters reinforced the trustworthiness of their accounts, while at the same time drawing the attention of the reader to the newsworthiness and exclusive nature of the account.<sup>103</sup> Londres for example starts his account of the bombardment of the Rheims cathedral by stressing his witnessing presence of this event: “They bombed Rheims and we saw it happen!”<sup>104</sup> Pisuise also indicates that ultimately being an eyewitness is the most important way to check the reliability of the information that circulates.

<sup>96</sup> Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 31-32.

<sup>97</sup> There are two exceptions in the selection of reportages from Londres in which he employs a third person perspective. The first is a short account about a sixteen year old soldier, who joined the army after his parents were killed, and the second account is a summarizing reportage about the Belgian army that is waiting for reinforcement from the French, in which both armies are personified, and are presented with a voice.

<sup>98</sup> Fontanille, “Quand le corps témoigne,” 89-90, 92.

<sup>99</sup> William Beach Thomas, “The New Fighting,” *Daily Mail*, October 15, 1914.

<sup>100</sup> Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 312.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Zelizer, “On “having been there,”” 408-428.

<sup>102</sup> Broersma, “A Daily Truth,” 27-29.

<sup>103</sup> Zelizer, “On “having been there,”” 408-411.

<sup>104</sup> Albert Londres, “Ils bombardent Reims...,” in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris: Arléa, 2007), 28.

From afar the gunfire of the artillery still resounds, but it is very far away. People ask and guess, speak of a renewed ceasefire. And then suddenly the message arrives. The Germans roam through town.

[...]

And it is true. When I arrive at Place du Théâtre, I find German grenadiers neatly dressed in khaki uniforms, their helmets with a cover in the same color as well.<sup>105</sup>

Beach Thomas illustrates this point quite plainly in his description of the ruins of the city Arras, showing that eyewitness observation is considered to be factual information: "The facts must suffice. I will only describe what I saw and did."<sup>106</sup> The notion of a fact is thus not considered to be at odds with personal perception.

This subjectivity becomes most obvious when the subject of the reporter assumes an active part in the events, becoming one of the central figures in the reportage. Beach Thomas, Ward Price and Londres all figure regularly in their own accounts, but the usual point of view is that of a first person minor, who closely observe the events in which other people figure. The reportages of Pisuise en Luger revolve more strongly around their own personal experiences, and are good examples of a first person major point of view. Their experiences act as a form of anecdotal evidence, which support the image of the war and war-struck society they are trying to convey. As a result the subject of the reporter becomes an integral part of the story.

What is interesting in this respect is that observations and descriptions of the reporters are occasionally based on quite subjective interpretation. Luger for example interprets the facial expression of two Belgian soldiers, who have been taken captive.

They all looked terribly disastrous and particularly the civilian made a face as if his mind no longer lingered at his scourged fatherland, but remembered his precursors, whose stiffened and chilly bodies are lying in ditches and orchards for days now.<sup>107</sup>

Although this happens only occasionally, it shows the freedom of the reporters with regard to the personally colored observations they could include in their reportages. Such a degree of subjectivity is typical for eyewitness reporting, but is also the reason why such accounts have been criticized with regard to their truthfulness.<sup>108</sup> Within the framework of the objectivity regime, subjectively colored information became suspicious, and stricter norms with regard to on-site reporting came into play.<sup>109</sup> The fact that the reportages contain such subjective elements therefore suggests that this framework emerged only gradually and was not yet dominant in this period. All in all, the different examples of the personal approach of the British, Dutch and French reporters clearly show that what constituted trustworthy reporting in this period was the result of the reporter's interaction with the tangible reality, in which subjectively colored information was not all that problematic yet.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Jean Louis Pisuise, "In Luik gedurende de belegering," *De Telegraaf*, August 9, 1914.

<sup>106</sup> William Beach Thomas, "A crime of which the world must know," *Daily Mail*, October 26, 1914.

<sup>107</sup> Johan Luger, "De krijgsbedrijven te land," *De Telegraaf*, August 11, 1914.

<sup>108</sup> Zelizer, "On 'having been there,'" 411-412, 415-416; Broersma, "A Daily Truth," 28-29.

<sup>109</sup> Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 127-130; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xv-xvi.

<sup>110</sup> Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 127-130; Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 41-60.



### ***Reflection and highlighting the reporting process***

Being both the experiencing subject and the narrator enabled the reporters to easily integrate reflection on their work. The reportages display a constant reflection on the difficulties the reporters encountered in reaching the armies - let alone the actual battle grounds, and the acquisition of reliable information they were in dire need of. The effects of censorship made it hard to trust any information that was not confirmed by one's own senses. Their restricted radius of action and the unreliability of the tall stories that circulated were the subject of frequent frustration.

There is nothing left these days, but to explore, investigate, finding contacts to, when the big day arrives, have connections everywhere. To achieve that we are generally busy for at least twenty hours a day, sometimes by foot, cycling for hours and - when heaven looks favorable upon us - occasionally by car. [...]

And the results of our effort? Relatively speaking so little for the readership that one - like me now - doesn't dare to devote an entire telegram to it.<sup>111</sup>

This does not only happen through explicit reflection on the problems accompanying censorship, but also more implicitly by just describing their courses, proceedings, and encounters:

Tickets to Hazebrouck are no longer sold. Despite all the temptations, it is still possible to find transportation that takes you there. This is the moment to revive our vagrant spirit: we are going on foot.

Something has happened in Hazebrouck, we don't know what as people tell all kind of stories.

One man coming from there says that the Germans are in the city, another who is leaving saw them flee, there were a hundred, there were a thousand, they came here, they are there; [...]

One thing is clear: something happened in Hazebrouck.<sup>112</sup>

This form of meta-reporting can partially be explained as a way for the reporters to apologize for the lack of newsworthy information, but it makes the reporting process quite transparent. It is therefore part of the discursive strategy of the reporters to emphasize the reliability of their accounts. They show how they gathered their information, attributing sources and explaining how they came to their image of reality. As a result of the emphasis on being there and the attention for and reflection on the difficulties of obtaining interesting and reliable information, the reporting process becomes a central part of the reportages. It is an important strategy to emphasize the reliability of their information and the credibility of their accounts. However, it also foregrounds the inherently subjective nature of on-site reporting, stimulating the discussion about the reliability of the eyewitness accounts.<sup>113</sup> The question to what extent a reporter was allowed to restage his experiences, and which narrative means were considered to lead to a trustworthy report led to different answers in the respective countries. Especially, the British reportages suggest that the means to present an authentic, true-to-life account were starting to compete with a more matter-of-fact way of conveying reality.

This difference can be discerned clearly in the role and nature of the reporters' reflections on the war. The British, Dutch, and French reportages all contain moments of reflection concerning the war. However, in the British, and to a lesser extent the Dutch, case the reflection is limited to rather

<sup>111</sup> Jean Louis Pisuise, "De krijgsbedrijven te land," *De Telegraaf*, August 18, 1914.

<sup>112</sup> Albert Londres, 'Une ville sous le coup'. in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, Arléa, 2007), 34.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Broersma, "A Daily Truth," 28-30; Zelizer, "On "having been there,"" 420-421.

pragmatic thoughts on the war. However, at times, Londres integrates his meditations on more fundamental - profound if you like - issues with regard to human behavior in a period of war.

For two days God is intervening. Encouraged by his creatures, he has brought out his armory: lightning, thunder, rain, hail. Under normal circumstances, there would be reason enough to get all kinds of illnesses. It is war. People are cold, but they choose not to feel it. People are cold, they are soaked, but as if they shouldn't be warm, as if they shouldn't be dry. It is fine. The hail cracks under the soles. It is a game. Always a moment of distraction in the great waves of emotion that torment you. Going into battle, your inner being rejuvenates itself. In reality, there is a certain place in the fields, an invisible barrier, where on the one hand one can breathe the ordinary and on the other hand the selected. One's soul changes form: you move from a life to the life.<sup>114</sup>

His highly personal reflection on the general anthropological characteristics of man points, besides to a somewhat stronger focus on the human aspects of the war, to the larger discursive freedom of French journalism with regard to subjectivity. Dutch journalism took an intermediate position in this struggle between conceptions of journalism. The different positions of these respective countries in this discussion are reinforced by the other textual features.

### ***Building tension***

Most accounts are composed chronologically, which allows the reporters to create tension into their accounts by letting the story gradually unfold. This way of recounting a story urges the reader to keep reading until the climax of the story is reached. It presents information in the form of a compelling story. The frequent use of this way of structuring a story shows that the use of the 'inverted pyramid' was not embraced - at least not within the genre of the reportage. Take for example Pisuisse's story about his arrest for being under suspicion of espionage. Telling a personal experience adds to the dramatic effect of the events, but what creates the tension and excitement is the fact that the reader does not know how his story will end. Pisuisse divulges carefully that he was making notes of the environment during his train ride back to Amsterdam, when he suddenly gets arrested at the station in Louvain:

I was then instantly surrounded by citizen guards, which took me to the first platform and to a very stern deputy of the gendarmerie and a very nervous lieutenant of civil guard. I then quickly gathered that my binoculars had been mistaken for a photo camera, which was the reason behind my apprehension. My papers, completely legitimate and even more trustworthy because of the permit that the mayor of Brussels had provided me, were checked, but turned out to be insufficient to adequately establish my occupation as a newspaper man.<sup>115</sup>

After his arrest things got even worse. His notes, in which he had written down information about the surveillance and defense strategies of the villages they passed, incriminated him, and Pisuisse was ordered to undress entirely for an extensive body search, before they finally released him.

<sup>114</sup> Albert Londres, 'Une voix d'homme au milieu des canons'. in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, Arléa, 2007), 52.

<sup>115</sup> Jean Louis Pisuisse, "Spionnenvrees," *De Telegraaf*, August 8, 1914.

And he checked my mouth, my ears, my nostrils, between my toes...anyway, everywhere where he could look and concluded then, what I could have told him without all these unsavory operations: 'Rien du tout'.<sup>116</sup>

A stronger technique to create tension and which helps to evoke the experience, which is only found in Londres' accounts, is to present the account in a way that the narration and the experience coincide.<sup>117</sup> Instead of the retrospective narration that is mostly used in the British and Dutch reportages, Londres often presents his stories as if he narrates directly during the event. He is the only one who in such cases switches from the past to the present tense - like in the following excerpt. As a result the reader is virtually placed in the shoes of the reporter, suddenly standing in the midst of the events that the reporter has obviously already experienced before he put it down on paper. The reader almost seems to enter the consciousness of the reporter, conveying the authenticity of the experience, but also foregrounding its subjective nature.<sup>118</sup> A good example of this can be found in the description of a sudden bombardment of Dunkirk.

Four hostile airplanes were flying over Dunkirk. The sky was radiating blue. In the same way, the most beautiful foreheads often carry the darkest thoughts.  
One after the other, shots erupt, everybody runs. More shots. Where? People run. The city retreats in all directions, the four planes circle above the roofs. From his doorstep a man is watching the sky through his binoculars. A shot tears off his arm. At every bang the head, guided by the ear, turns to all four corners of town. Little girls in the street are crying loud. They are enshrouded in a corridor. The bullets of the rifle penetrated the air as if they were touching felt. It is a muffled sound. More shots. Nobody counted them, no one felt like counting. They seem three times more numerous. The bombs are falling. [...] The explosions stop. The airplanes do not disappear. Noon.<sup>119</sup>

This way the feeling of proximity to the story is increased. Subsequently the account becomes more vivid and comes across as much more authentic, because the reader almost looks through the eyes of the reporter. In general, building tension is a common strategy of all reporters to convey the excitement they experience and to draw the reader in the often sensational nature of the war experiences. Londres however uses more elaborate techniques to build tension, which again points to the large freedom within French journalistic discourse with regard to subjectivity.

### **Imagery**

The most important technique the reporters employ to supply a vicarious experience is the integration of expressive imagery in their depictions of the war. Such descriptions simultaneously convey what happened, what kind of atmosphere surrounded the event, and how it emotionally impacted the people involved. Contrary to the French, the Dutch and the British reportages only sporadically make use of imagery. More importantly, Londres' imagery is much more suggestive, elaborate and unconventional, which links up to his work as a poet.<sup>120</sup>

A comparison of the way Ward Price and Londres have described the bombardment and the ruins of the cathedral in Rheims illustrates this point nicely. The cathedral in Rheims was an important

<sup>116</sup> Pisuise, "Spionnenvrees."

<sup>117</sup> Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 35.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 55-60; Kostenzer, *Die literarische Reportage*, 82-93.

<sup>119</sup> Albert Londres, "De l'angoisse sur deux villes," in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, Arléa, 2007), 69-70.

<sup>120</sup> Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 25.

national symbol as it was the traditional spot where, before the French Revolution, the kings were crowned.<sup>121</sup> In both the French and the British press the destruction of this famous landmark was covered extensively - with the first full-page picture in the *Daily Mail* portraying the cathedral. It came to symbolize the deliberate and systematic destruction of French cultural heritage, and added to the stereotype of the German army as a barbaric and uncultivated horde.<sup>122</sup> In his account - containing the most vivid descriptions of all his reportages - Ward Price uses several images to convey what he saw.

It [the cathedral] is now no more than an empty shell of charred and blackened walls. Grim remembrance of this abominable deed will always remain with me as with all who saw it. The sight of the flames devouring this splendid relic of the thirteenth century, which took 150 years to build and which has been respected through all the countless wars that have been waged in France since then, was terrible and yet fascinating. It was as though one were watching something supernatural - the work of fiends themselves.<sup>123</sup>

The imagery used here - the empty shell, the devouring flames, the work of fiends - helps paint the picture of the devastation. Later on in the account Ward Price also speaks of “naked walls” and a “yawning” roof, through which the cathedral gets personified. This imagery is somewhat ‘worn’, meaning that the images are used so often that their expressive qualities are wearing off; the images have become conventional and their meaning has become obvious and common parlance. In his choice of imagery Ward Price generally does not stray too far from the literal description, sometimes even explaining what he aims to convey with the images he uses.

There is not as much to see as one expected from the outside, for the towers and walls still stand and the scars on their beautiful Gothic decoration caused by the German shells are not easily distinguished by the stranger's eye from those worn by the weather of 600 years. *But the great doors yawn nakedly, for the old oak portals are entirely consumed* [my italics, FH].<sup>124</sup>

This suggests that the emerging norms, demanding clear-cut description, gradually gained prominence over the evocative portrayal of an authentic, but subjective experience and therefore an inherently partial representation of reality.

This is not the case with the imagery that is used by Londres, which is much richer and a lot less conventional. A key characteristic of his reportage is his use of personification of which his description of the cathedral of Rheims offers a prime example.

Rheims appeared to us at a distance of fifteen kilometers. The cathedral showcased the majesty of its lines and at the bottom of the plain it sang its poem of bricks. We couldn't take our eyes off of it.<sup>125</sup>

He personifies the cathedral affectionately, describing it as an embodied poem, and, from more up front as a moribund soul. The image Londres uses for the burning cathedral illustrates his elaborate use of images.

<sup>121</sup> Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 35.

<sup>122</sup> Gregory, “Clash of Cultures,” 30-39; Nolan, “Press and Propaganda,” 58-62.

<sup>123</sup> George Ward Price, “How Rheims Cathedral was shelled,” *Daily Mail*, September 21, 1914.

<sup>124</sup> George Ward Price, “What is left of Rheims Cathedral,” *Daily Mail*, September 22, 1914.

<sup>125</sup> Londres, “Ils bombardent Reims....,” 28-29.

The howitzers bombard the city. Plumes of smoke rise from all corners. Against a background, red and moving like a cloth that is cleaned out, the cathedral, extending its contours to the sky, is praying ardently. She commends her soul to God.<sup>126</sup>

By comparing the burning church and the smoke and fumes that rise from it to a fluttering shroud, Londres not only gives a telling image of the scene, but also conveys his feelings of grief. The last sentence, which offers a figuratively formulated interpretation of the former image as well, emphasizes the religious connotation of the image, in which the rising smoke represents the soul of the cathedral ascending to heaven.

The reportages of the respective reporters sometimes contain what in technical terms is called a 'metonymic metaphor'. This entails the use of figurative images that are also present in their literal sense.<sup>127</sup> Real images from the war, like corpses, wounds, shells, are used as metaphors to portray the devastations of the cities and villages they encounter. This contiguity between the metaphorical and literal images is mutually reinforcing and augments the account's expressiveness. Yet, the reporters diverge in the degree to which they exploit this technique. First and foremost it is Londres, whose reportages are full of such metaphors revolving around injuries and death, and more importantly he makes the most elaborate use of it. The following image of the severely wounded soldier lies at the heart of the image world Londres invokes.<sup>128</sup>

It is no longer her, only her façade.

It is a soldier one would recognize from afar by his ever high silhouette, but who, after approaching, would open his cloak and reveal his lacerated chest.<sup>129</sup>

Similar descriptions are constantly recurring in his reportage. The cathedral of Rheims is for instance also described as "convulsive" and as "nothing more than a wound."<sup>130</sup> By using a large range of such images revolving around this specific semantic field, Londres creates a 'paradigm' of imagery typifying his writing style.<sup>131</sup>

This elaborate imagery demands quite some interpretation from the reader, and implicitly conveys the idiosyncratic nature of Londres' observations, foregrounding the subjective origins of his reportages. They contribute to the authenticity of Londres' portrayal of reality, but simultaneously reveal its particularity and subjectivity. However, within French journalism discourse this seems not to be any problem, because such lifelike descriptions were perceived as conveying reality in an authentic fashion. In addition, these elements also proved the artistic mastery of the reporter as they were an integral part of the dominant realistic and naturalistic current within literature in that period.<sup>132</sup>

### **Symbolic depictions**

Londres not only uses images to convey the deeply saddening spectacle of war-struck France, but symbols as well. Certain observations of Londres transcend their literal meaning and become symbolic for the agony that has befallen French society. The best - and at the same time the most

<sup>126</sup> Londres, "Ils bombardent Reims...." 28-29.

<sup>127</sup> Gretha Otten-van der Kaap, *Lied van 't leven, bloemen van passie: metaforen in de poëzie van Tachtig* (Groningen: [n.p.], 2005), 61-62.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 214-217.

<sup>129</sup> Albert Londres, "L'agonie de la basilique", in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, Arléa, 2007), 31.

<sup>130</sup> Londres, "L'agonie de la basilique," 31-32.

<sup>131</sup> Otten-van der Kaap, *Lied van 't Leven*, 56-57.

<sup>132</sup> Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 207-212; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 45-48; Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 346-372.

curious and uncanny - example is an episode in one of his reportages, in which Londres, after witnessing a grenade strike on the Germans by a cruiser, encounters a fisherman on the beach.

The tide is low. Like us, another man is standing on the sand. We see him from afar, touching things with a bent back. Why are the ones that are best equipped for solitude instinctively drawn to company in these times? Is it because each soul in this region could expire in an instant and that one needs to pay him tribute beforehand?

Waiting on the return of the ships that were sailing behind each other again, we walked over to this man. Many times he stuck his arm deep in a jug, pulling up a substance that he, stooped and advancing with spread legs, dispersed just above the water. He lifted his head several times to see us come, but while continuing to pull up and spread out. His hands were drooping red. The jug was a jug with clotted blood. He made large lumps out of it, which he attached to fish hooks anticipating the tide. A jug of blood! We had actually come here to stay away from seeing blood for two days. We are no sissies. We know how to bridle the feelings that get away from us. But we need some time to fill the emptiness that is caused by the compassion with others. It is this time that we came searching. A jug of blood! Do you only labor with your hands, fisherman?<sup>133</sup>

The expressive and disturbing image of the fisherman who uses lumps of clotted blood as bait on his fishing hooks can be interpreted as a symbol of the French population, which is deeply affected by the terrible bloodshed of the war, but nevertheless try to conserve some elements of its normal everyday life.<sup>134</sup> What would normally be a positive image of a fisherman at work is now turned into a wry metaphor for France's trauma. This is again a striking illustration of the personal approach of Londres. He openly conveys how the representation of reality for him means to show how the world-out-there interacts with his own particular subjective consciousness. To achieve this goal he is not afraid to use rather hermetic imagery, which demands effort from the reader and is open to multiple interpretations.<sup>135</sup> Clearly, journalistic norms relating to objectivity do not play a role in his conception of journalism.

The Dutch reportages generally do not have the far-reaching and dense use of imagery as those of Londres, but at one point in one of his reportages Luger's descriptions also become symbolic. His depiction of a war-struck Belgian village goes beyond the literal level, and - similar to Londres' symbol of the blood bait - expresses the perverse inversion that war inflicts on the Belgian society.

That is the thorniest scorn - the land is ambushed by the war during harvest time, is affected in its immediate existence. The horses trample the oats and rye - the cows are trotting around woefully in the small meadows at the farmhouses, but the houses are empty and the milk men in the army or executed in the ditches. It is like they have tried to bring the blooming country to a halt by destroying all living things, but everywhere the trampled grain erects itself again, yet the one that sowed it will never recover. Silence prevails everywhere. [...]

And before we drove into the village the rows of deceased were laying alongside the main road in the gullies, as speechless as the landscape, the quiet, pale faces in the sunlight. [...] The peasants of those villages might have envisioned the beautiful summer of '14, when death collected its harvest.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Albert Londres, "Six vaisseaux vus du ravage", in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, Arléa, 2007), 56.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 86-87.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. Assouline, *Albert Londres*, 86-87, 352-357, 361.

<sup>136</sup> Johan Luger, "Een week op de Belgische grens II," *De Telegraaf*, August 17, 1914.

The suggestive silence, the ripe crops, which strongly contrasts with the rows of corpses, and the allegoric harvesting death are semantically linked, and reinforce each other. By showing the literal juxtaposition of life and death in the countryside Luger seems to indicate that the land itself shows how the war has turned the whole circle of life upside down. Through the literal presence of the symbols this technique fuses expressivity with authenticity. Although I have encountered this only once in my selection of his reportages, it indicates a great freedom within Dutch journalistic discourse in this period, and suggests that there are certainly ties with literary discourse.<sup>137</sup>

### **Tone**

Luger's tone in the quotation above is grave. In general the Dutch reportages are more light-hearted, which can in part be attributed to the neutral position of the Netherlands during the war. Nevertheless, it also points to one of the selling points of *De Telegraaf* as a popular paper. The stories, full of their personal experiences, mostly read like exciting adventures and are often quite amusing. The narrators tone reinforces this type of story and is generally rather vivacious. Take for example Pisuise's story about his arrest from which I have quoted before. Although he might also have experienced feelings of anxiety, he emphasizes the comical side of this adventure and maintains a light-hearted tone:

When I was down to "my pince-nez and my wedding ring", a gentleman, who might have been a doctor, came to examine me, yes even tapping on me... like I might have hidden documents underneath my skin!<sup>138</sup>

Such accounts come across as exciting stories that could also have been exchanged in a bar over a beer so to speak. This light-heartedness is predominant, and the more gruesome episodes that especially Luger comes across are almost always alternated with humorous anecdotes.<sup>139</sup> Presenting a story as a personal adventure fits in well with the journalistic ideas *De Telegraaf* upheld. It was a newspaper that looked for news everywhere, and championed a playful and adventurous form of journalism.<sup>140</sup>

Although, at some moments the British also express feelings of excitement and fascination while witnessing war, in general the reportages of Pisuise and Luger have a lighter touch than their British and French counterparts. Especially, Londres adopts a tone that is much more dramatic. At a certain moment this even leads to an emotional exclamation in which Londres, after witnessing the devastations in Arras, invokes Rheims: "Rheims! You are not alone anymore: Arras is in ruins."<sup>141</sup> Such a tone is reinforced by Londres' use of grim symbols and gruesome imagery. It all shows the strong personal engagement of the reporter, by which he expresses nationally felt emotions of anxiety, helplessness, and loss.<sup>142</sup>

To some extent, the differences in tone can partially be attributed to the fact that the Netherlands had not part in the actual warfare, and Britain was not actually occupied. However, this does offer an entirely satisfying explanation. People in all these countries were all shaken by the war and the violence and atrocities it brought with it. Moreover, the *Daily Mail* has even been characterized as

<sup>137</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-65.

<sup>138</sup> Pisuise, "Spionnenvrees."

<sup>139</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 133.

<sup>140</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 102-103.

<sup>141</sup> Albert Londres, "Arras aussi!" in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris: Arléa, 2007), 36.

<sup>142</sup> Redfern, *Writing on the Move*, 35-37.

a daily that during war time demonized Germany with stories about its atrocities.<sup>143</sup> Thus, these differences also point to divergences in the journalistic discourse of the respective countries.

## Conclusion

This analysis shows that the narrative strategies the different reporters employ in their accounts of the war to convey their authenticity are fairly similar. They all have a personal approach to the events of the war, in which they emphasize their presence rather than hiding the subjective nature of their reportages. Being an eyewitness seems to be shorthand for reliability. Furthermore, presenting an account in a way that is as true to life as possible, consisting of dialogue, detailed description, and expressive imagery, couched in a compelling composition in which tension is build up, seems to convey the authenticity of the reporters' accounts. In this respect the metonymic metaphors play an important part. Their capacity to render a vivid portrayal, combined with the authenticity of the images that are embedded in the literal level of the description, gives the accounts a great persuasive force. In this period facts are thus not yet at odds with personal perception, which can in the case of Dutch and French journalism partially be attributed by the influence of literary naturalism.

Especially, Londres however employs these techniques in a so much more elaborate way, creating a tightly knit framework of metaphors for example, that his accounts still diverge considerably from the Dutch and British reportages. These differences manifest themselves in what I call differences in proximity. In the British and Dutch accounts the reader gets a graphic picture of the war, but still remains at a distance because the reporters themselves more often tell the reader what the impact of the events they witnessed was. Take Ward Price, for example, who explicitly tells the reader what the effect of his observations is instead of making this tangible:

At the same time, it is an eerie experience to hurry along street after street in the heart of what is normally a busy town and not to see a living thing nor hear a sound but one's own echoing footsteps and the constant roar of gun fire.<sup>144</sup>

Such distance is entirely gone in the way Londres portrays his experiences. He includes the reader in the array of emotions he feels in response of the things he sees. In his account of the destruction of Rheims, for example, the devastation of the cathedral comes across as if Londres is bereft of someone very close and dear to him. Through his expressive way of writing he fuses his feelings with his observations, and lets his audience virtually enter his mind.

In general these results indicate that factual reporting around this period was based on a form of 'naïve empiricism', in which its openly subjective nature was not considered a problem. The presence of the reporter was rather emphasized as a sign of reliability than hidden from the reader. The imagery and symbols in Londres' reportages also indicate that French journalistic discourse offered more freedom in the elaborate use of the narrative techniques, and therefore was more focused on the expressive qualities of reporting than the Dutch and certainly the British discourse. This can be explained by the orientation of French journalists on literary discourse. A similar approach to journalism was also present in the Netherlands, but the literary style could not take away from the journalistic goal to provide straightforward information.<sup>145</sup> The British discourse differs most from its

<sup>143</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 117-121; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 132-134; Gregory, "Clash of Cultures," 25-39.

<sup>144</sup> Ward Price, "What is left of Rheims Cathedral."

<sup>145</sup> Ferenczi, *L'invention du journalisme*, 19-47; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-63.



French and Dutch counterparts in this respect as it shows the first signs of a growing focus on facts as depersonalized pieces of information instead of a subjectively colored depiction of an experience. Nevertheless, British journalism certainly did not yet adhere to the objectivity regime.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Cf. Chalaby, *Invention of journalism*, 130-140.



# Convergence and distinction

## Newspaper competition in the inter-war years 1918-1939

During the Great War the genre of the reportage gained some prominence. As the previous chapter has shown these accounts focus mostly on the reporter as witness-ambassador, who provides a representation of an authentic but subjective experience. The overt acknowledgement of the subjectivity of the reporter in the process of gathering and organizing information reinforces the quantitative picture that the gradually developing active reporting routines are not inextricably tied to the objectivity regime. The slowly burgeoning focus on factual reporting cannot be equated with the narrow conception of factuality within the objectivity regime. Still, the censorship and propaganda in this period made journalists aware of the importance of having their own independent routines of gathering newsworthy information. In that sense the First World War acted as a catalyst for the development of a professional journalism practice.<sup>1</sup> In this period the debate about factual reporting focused on norms, like independence, impartiality or detachment, but did not form a coherent objectivity regime. In addition, the term objectivity itself did not play such an important role in this debate. When it was mentioned, it mainly had the strategic role of demarcating journalism as a profession. In such cases the meaning of the notion proved to be rather fluid and was easily adapted to the particular national journalistic tradition, leaving only some similarities to the American conception of the objectivity regime.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the grand narrative of journalism history does not apply to this period. At this point, the set of active reporting routines was still in the course of development. In the case of Britain and the Netherlands the pace of this development after the war has been somewhat exaggerated by press historians, whereas it is underestimated with regard to French journalism. In part, this is the result of the institutional focus of many press histories. Too often the discursive developments are presented as a direct and almost mono-causal result of the organization and structure of the press landscape. This perspective disregards the indirect nature of the influence of institutional characteristics on discursive developments, and the reciprocal relation between the institutional and discursive level. I argue that the structure of a press landscape provides important facilitating incentives or limiting conditions for the way journalistic discourse develops. Yet, journalism discourse should not be seen as direct translation of the institutional organization of the press.

Research into the institutional characteristics of the press in France points to the difficulties the French dailies experienced in coping with the aftermaths of the First World War. The war had created an unfavorable commercial environment for the national dailies based in Paris. This led to a general decline of their circulation and subsequently to a diminishing profit. Conversely, in the British and Dutch case the newspaper business kept flourishing. It is widely believed that this has led to a difference in the scholarly analysis of the discursive developments. The British and Dutch

1 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 158-162; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 151-155; Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 76-84.

2 Cf. Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 477; Høyer, "Old and New Journalism," 71-72; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 83-88, 145.

development is presented as a commercially flourishing and therefore competitive and industrious period, which encouraged journalists to further develop a clearly delineated professional framework. By contrast French scholars have presented the image of a press in commercial decline that has lost its journalistic creativity. These scholars seem almost a bit disappointed by their own conclusions that the national dailies were not as innovative as the decades preceding the war. Martin for instance writes:

In the year that followed the war, the daily press evolved, but without evidence of the same imagination of the end of the previous century and without inventing a novel formula.<sup>3</sup>

Implicitly commercial success is equated with competition, which is regarded as conditional for journalistic innovation or development. Yet, such a perspective disregards the law of the handicap of a head start, which Dutch historian Jan Romein has formulated in his essay on the dialectics of progress in 1937. He argues that the commercial success of an initially innovative approach or an invention can lead to the exploitation of this success without investing in further innovations. It can therefore take away the innovative edge of an enterprise.<sup>4</sup> From the other end of that perspective, commercial adversity can function as an incentive for innovation.<sup>5</sup> Lord Northcliffe's *Daily Mirror* for instance was originally fashioned to cater to what was considered as the needs of a female readership. However, when circulation plummeted and the daily was losing money, Northcliffe hired Hamilton Fyfe as new editor-in-chief to redesign it into an innovative picture paper.<sup>6</sup>

The stereotypical image of the way journalism developed in the three countries is reinforced by the emphasis on the commercial situation of the press in the respective countries and the equation of the development of a professional practice with objective journalism.<sup>7</sup> In comparison to the assumed frontrunner in this respect, Great Britain, French journalism is presented as lagging behind in the adoption of such a professional framework.<sup>8</sup> The Netherlands in this case is generally considered as taking a middle course. This image lacks empirical support and based on my analysis I contend that such a perspective neglects the ongoing competition between journalistic conceptions within the respective cultures.

The national press histories in the respective countries demonstrate that in all three cases the active reporting routines moved closer to the center of the debate about journalism's professional standards. These routines were put forward as important ways to gather factual newsworthy information instead of mostly offering reflection. Yet, in spite of the growing prominence of active reporting as a professional ideal, the data suggests these routines were not yet a broadly employed practice; they did however gain some further ground. Moreover, the way these routines were shaped in the different journalistic cultures points to the versatile nature of these routines. In France and the Netherlands the active reporting routines maintained its close relation with literature. The image of the *grand reporter*, whose mediating subjectivity was still at the heart of the reporting practice, was embraced as a professional ideal. In Britain the growing emphasis of active reporting as the standard of professional journalism was accompanied by the disconnection of the bonds between

<sup>3</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 173.

<sup>4</sup> Jan Romein, "De dialectiek van de vooruitgang," in *Het onvoltooid verleden. Kulturhistorische studies*, ed. Jan Romein (Amsterdam: Querido, 1937), 9-64 [Consulted at: [www.dbnl.org/tekst/\\_for003193501\\_01/\\_for003193501\\_01\\_0124.php](http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_for003193501_01/_for003193501_01_0124.php)].

<sup>5</sup> Erik van der Hoeven, *De wet van de stimulerende achterstand* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1980), 13-14.

<sup>6</sup> Taylor, *Great Outsiders*, 80-83; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 132-133.

<sup>7</sup> Schudson & Anderson, "Objectivity, Professionalism," 92-93.

<sup>8</sup> Chababy, "Anglo-American Invention," 320-322; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 159-167, 173-174; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 247-257.

information and subjective experience; the witness-ambassador had fallen out of favor. In this sense British journalism moved closer to the objectivity regime. Yet, they did not adopt all of its norms. Especially, impartiality was not considered to be a necessary characteristic of reporting. Hampton argues that objectivity as an explicit norm was therefore rejected.<sup>9</sup> For these reasons Chalaby's claim that by the inter-war period objectivity had grown into the dominant characteristic of journalism's professional framework is highly problematic.<sup>10</sup>

My analysis suggests that a thorough understanding of the way the norms, routines, and forms have developed, needs to take into account the interaction between the serious and the popular press in this period. Before the First World War the serious press did not pay that much attention to their popular counterparts, but in the inter-war period they could no longer ignore the success of this new approach to journalism. Serious dailies started to extend their news selection to the topics that were typical for the popular dailies. Based on the data, I argue that the development of the different type of dailies in the inter-war period can be characterized as displaying a 'diverged convergence'. On a basic level the dailies showed a general convergence in their journalistic focus, their appearance, and their presentation of the editorial content. In this respect a basic blueprint of a typical daily was created. Yet, within this shared general framework of the characteristics of a newspaper, the different dailies attempted to find their unique selling points and tried to build and maintain a journalistic profile that made them stand out from the crowd. For instance, every daily contained sports coverage, but the popular dailies devoted considerably more attention to this topic than their serious counterparts. Thus, these different dailies still determined the bandwidth of what a newspaper could look like.

In this period the momentum seems to have shifted somewhat to the popular dailies due to their success, but they still had to keep track of the quality standards of the serious papers. Such a dynamic also applies to the development of the active reporting routines and the degree to which they were embraced by journalists. The disparities between the dailies in the different countries should also be related to the specific character and mutual relation of these two types of dailies. The loyal pillarized public of the Dutch quality dailies for instance helped to maintain their dominant position and commercial success, which could explain the continuing uniformity of Dutch journalism discourse in this period.

## Commercial competition - between success and distress

The differences in commercial success between the struggling French press on the one hand and the flourishing British and Dutch press on the other can be explained by several interlinked factors. Press historians have pointed to the image problem the French press was left with after World War I. The reputation of the French press was not that strong to begin with due to its reputation of venality. In the 1920s several stories were published in which the venality of the press was made abundantly clear. In one of the most extensive bribes, uncovered by *L'Humanité* in 1923, documents were disclosed that proved that before the war almost the entire French press had been bribed by the Russian Czar to promote the possibility to invest in the large loan the French state was granting him and to keep negative news about Russia out of the papers. In that same period the press was severely criticized for its performance during World War I. The newspapers were held accountable for the propagandistic and unreliable content or *bourrage de crâne* it had published during the war.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 477-478.

<sup>10</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 320-322.

<sup>11</sup> Jeanneney, *Histoire des médias*, 143; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 165-167; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 108-114; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 303-306.

Next to the deteriorating image of the French press, the war had created a major paper shortage, which therefore had to be imported. This made the price of paper sky-rocket, adding to the already growing overhead costs.<sup>12</sup> The latter was a general problem. In all three countries the dailies had to make necessary investments in new printing technologies as their size increased and the content and lay-out became livelier. In addition, journalists established their own unions and organized themselves more adequately after the war. In the aftermaths of the war the financial position of an average journalist had declined. Their wages had not kept up with the strong inflation after the war, which had hit France the hardest.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the level of the wages differed considerably between dailies. In the years directly after the war the unions in the respective countries addressed this issue and demanded a collective minimum wage agreement, a general increase in wages and better social benefits, like paid holidays and a solid pension arrangement. This social organization of the occupation meant a serious increase in the amount of money that needed to be reserved for personnel.<sup>14</sup>

These rising costs made it much harder for daily newspapers to keep in business in the inter-war years, and according to the existing scholarship especially in Great Britain and France this was one of the reasons for the reduction of the number of dailies.<sup>15</sup> Due to the pillarized press landscape with its loyal readership, the Netherlands was less affected in this respect and most dailies could stay in business. Yet, the commercial opportunities were not as promising as before.<sup>16</sup> Across the board, this encouraged newspaper owners to think about ways to reduce or share such overhead costs. In the British press landscape, characterized by the entrepreneurial spirit of the press barons, this resulted in quite far reaching concentration of ownership. As scholars have demonstrated, the British newspaper business had developed into a domain dominated by large-scale enterprises comprising of multiple newspaper business, in which profitability had grown out into the most important rationale behind the publication of a newspaper.<sup>17</sup> The Northcliffe conglomerate Associated Newspaper for instance - after the death of Northcliffe controlled by his brother lord Rothermere - was the market leader in the 1920s, controlling 40% of the national morning and 45% of the national evening newspaper circulation. By the 1930s the press market was controlled by four large consortiums, which owned almost 50% of the national and local newspapers.<sup>18</sup>

In the Netherlands and France ownership concentration was not absent, but certainly much less prominent. Press historians have argued that the pillarized press landscape in the Netherlands and the less appealing commercial environment in France made such developments less obvious or profitable. In these two countries cost reduction was found in cooperation on respectively the publishing and printing level, and the distribution and advertisement level. In the Netherlands the different printing companies merged into larger companies, which owned several newspaper titles.<sup>19</sup> In France, distributing company Hachette created more or less a monopoly position and with

<sup>12</sup> Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 253.

<sup>13</sup> Jean-Claude Debeir, "Inflation et stabilisation en France (1919-1928)," *Revue économique* 31, no.4 (1980): 622-624; Sho-Chieh Tsiang, "Fluctuating Exchange Rates in Countries with Relatively Stable Economies: Some European Experiences after World War I," *Staff Papers - International Monetary Fund* 7, no.2 (1959): 259-273.

<sup>14</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 138-140, 151-155; Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 60; Elliot, "Professional ideology," 173-175; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 255-257; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 163-164, 211-224; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 106-108; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 179-181; Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 159; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 170.

<sup>15</sup> Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 250; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 152.

<sup>16</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 158-160.

<sup>17</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 138, 152-155, 168; Graham Murdock & Peter Golding, "The Structure, Ownership and Control of the Press, 1914-76," in *Newspaper History from the 17th century to the present day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978), 130-132; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 45-53.

<sup>18</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 164-165.

<sup>19</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 159-160.

the exception of *Le Petit Parisien* it was the exclusive distributor of the French press. Although this cooperation helped companies to share the distribution costs the monopoly position of Hachette made the endeavor more expensive than necessary as Hachette could determine its price without taking any competition into account. The same goes for the advertisement branch of Havas, which had started out as a press agency, but also assumed an intermediary role between advertisers and newspapers. The collaboration between dailies could prevent them from killing the level of the advertisement rates and subsequently the amount of revenues in the course of the competition among themselves. However, as Havas also more or less had a monopoly in this respect the benefits of this construction were disappointing.<sup>20</sup> This forced the French dailies to raise their cover price, causing them to be among the most costly in the world. Obviously, this was not beneficial for the circulation, and especially the national press had difficulties keeping up their circulation.<sup>21</sup>

## Competing for readership

Whereas the national dailies in Britain and the Netherlands actively tapped into new groups of readership, the national press in France was less successful in this respect. The general circulation in France increased from 9,5 million at the end of World War I to 11 million just before the Second World War, but the circulation of the national press did not account for this growth. These Parisian dailies lost ground, while their regional and local counterparts gained circulation.<sup>22</sup> In Britain the total circulation doubled in the inter-war years from 4.7 million in 1926 to 10.6 million in 1939. With a withering regional press, this increase can be mainly ascribed to the growth of the national newspapers.<sup>23</sup> The general circulation in the Netherlands was still growing after the First World War and reached its peak with a general circulation of approximately 2 million at the start of the 1930s, when the economic crisis hit the Netherlands - and the rest of Europe. However, this has been calculated to be around the saturation point of the Dutch press market, thus much more growth was not possible anyway.<sup>24</sup>

The respective general decline or increase in the three countries was by no means evenly spread, and the specific dailies showed different degrees of success or failure. Only in the Netherlands all the national dailies increased their circulation, but, as the available figures suggest, also unevenly. *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *De Maasbode* increased their circulation from respectively 17,000 and 8,000 to roughly 50,000 at the end of the 1930s. In this period *De Telegraaf* could boast a circulation of more than 100,000 copies.<sup>25</sup>

In France, the circulation numbers that can be found in the press histories also show differences between the dailies. The *presse d'opinion*, after having struggled through the 1920s, found some renewed success in the 1930s, whereas the *presse d'information* had to cope with decreasing circulation. French press historian Patrick Eveno argues that the success of the former dailies can be partially explained by the growing distrust of the *presse d'information*. Their poor performance during the First World War and the exposure of the widespread venality had discredited the belief in their ability of independently providing newsworthy information. According to Eveno, this suspicion made people return to the reflective dailies. Because of their clear-cut and overt ideological

20 Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 82-83; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 250-255, 290-293; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 160-162; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 104.

21 Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 82; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 164.

22 Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 159-161; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 250.

23 Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 153-155.

24 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 158.

25 Van de Plasse & Verbei, *Kroniek*, 192-193.

orientation, the role of factual news was less important for these dailies. *Le Figaro* for instance, after having experienced large fluctuations under the ownership of eccentric perfume tycoon François Coty, went up when Pierre Brisson became editor in chief and circulation stabilized at 80,000 in 1938.<sup>26</sup> The explanation given by Eveno is interesting, but is hard to prove. My data for instance suggests that this reorientation on opinion had already manifested in 1925, a time in which *Le Figaro* was still struggling. Moreover, the decline of the *presse d'information* can also be attributed to the growing dominance of the provincial press and the subsequent stronger competition for readership between the national dailies themselves. Nevertheless, Eveno's attempt to explain the situation after the war is valuable for it highlights the ongoing competition between the different conceptions of journalism.

The slumping circulation of the *presse d'information* did not change the fact that these papers still had a much larger target audience and easily outsold their reflective counterparts.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the position of the strongest representatives of the *presse d'information*, *les quatre grands*, had declined especially during the 1930s. Even *Le Petit Parisien*, which could maintain a circulation of over a million for quite some time went down to roughly 900,000 sold copies at the end of the 1930s, thus losing more than third of its circulation after World War I. The other three, *Le Matin*, *Le Journal* and *Le Petit Journal*, lost an even larger share and went back a circulation between 400,000 and 150,000.<sup>28</sup>

The circulation figures of the British papers also convey clear differences between the individual dailies. The *Daily Mail* became market leader in the first years after the war as it grew from a circulation of 700,000 in the years before the war to a steady 1.75 million around 1922. However, between 1930 and 1937 sales dropped from 1.85 million to 1.58 million copies.<sup>29</sup> The *Daily Mirror* showed a gradual decline of its circulation in the inter-war years and *The Times* kept on struggling as it had been doing before the First World War.<sup>30</sup>

Based on these fluctuations in the circulation rates, scholars have pointed to the increasing competition in the inter-war period, in which dailies had to keep reinventing themselves to keep up with the competition. Especially the inter-war years in Britain were characterized by vehement 'circulation wars', particularly between the popular dailies.<sup>31</sup> In almost every way possible they tried to attract readership and lure the public over to their daily. An important strategy was, for example, spending enormous amounts of money on special offers and free gifts.<sup>32</sup> The *Daily Herald* for example offered free gifts as large as whole sets of bound novels by Charles Dickens, and it has been estimated that the four largest dailies, the *Herald*, the *Mail*, the *Mirror*, and the *Express* yearly spent over 3 million between them on free gifts.<sup>33</sup>

In the Netherlands similar strategies were employed, but on a much smaller scale. The more commercially driven newspapers did introduce special offers and discounts to attract readers. Wolf for instance describes how in 1921 *De Telegraaf* introduced the possibility of a weekly subscription, which made it possible to decide about an extension at the end of every week. This marketing strategy played an important role in their growing readership. Moreover, in trying to secure their readership they offered free services. For instance, several papers made an arrangement that buying

<sup>26</sup> Blandin, *Le Figaro*, 126, 131-137.

<sup>27</sup> Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 103-104.

<sup>28</sup> Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 249-250, 312; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 226.

<sup>29</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 130, 135.

<sup>30</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 109, 154.

<sup>31</sup> Murdock & Golding, "Structure, ownership," 131; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 153-159.

<sup>32</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 153-155; Murdock & Golding, "Structure, ownership," 131-132.

<sup>33</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 154.

a paper also meant that the reader had insurance in case of a fatal accident.<sup>34</sup> Still, such commercial incentives were minor compared to the circulation wars in Britain.<sup>35</sup> The competition between the dailies in the Netherlands, with its subscription tradition that made it less dependent on such ad-hoc strategies, was not as vigorous. Moreover, because of the stratification of the press, corresponding to the pillarized political landscape, many dailies wrote for a comparatively well-delineated and loyal audience that adhered to a certain party ideology.<sup>36</sup>

In France competition for circulation was boosted by the shrinking national press market, but the financial situation of most papers did not allow for costly gift strategies to lure readers to their daily. The decreasing circulation determined for an important part their difficulties in coping with the growing costs of publishing a daily. The problematic financial situation of the French press has all too often had a negative influence on the depiction and assessment of the discursive development of the dailies. As a result a nuanced inquiry into the way journalism practice has developed in relation to the commercial situation is lacking in the existing scholarship.

First of all, the general image of press that is conveyed in the press histories obscures the fact that the commercial struggle did not have a uniform outcome. *Le Petit Parisien* for instance still had a circulation of around a million copies a day, making a profit of several million francs a year. More importantly, this situation did not solely have a negative effect on journalism, but also offered an important incentive for new initiatives. A new journalistic endeavor, like *Paris-Soir* for instance, rapidly grew out into a huge commercial success.<sup>37</sup> The daily was founded in 1930 by Jean Prouvost and exploited the emerging concept of a popular daily to the fullest with a strong emphasis on photographic content and entertainment; it had for instance 18 correspondents in its service solely to cover sports. However, such entertaining content was paired to interesting reflective articles, for which the daily opened its columns to esteemed political figures and publicists of that time, from all sides of the political spectrum. By 1939 *Paris-Soir* had reached a circulation of over 2 million, and was by far the best-selling national daily.<sup>38</sup> The development of *Paris-Soir* can be compared to the introduction of the *Daily Herald* in Great Britain, which had a similar impact on the press market. Its success affected the circulation of the *Mail* and the *Mirror*, which dropped considerably.<sup>39</sup> Yet, although this paper is discussed in most press histories, this does not change the predominantly negative assessment of the discursive development within the press landscape.

In part, an explanation for the decline of circulation of these particular British and French papers can be found in the dynamics of progress or the law of the handicap of a head start. The dailies in question had developed a successful formula before the war, which they maintained in the period after the war. However, in this period they had to deal with new competition from other dailies that had 'improved' this successful formula and had an innovative edge on their popular counterparts. It is important to acknowledge that both the flourishing markets in Britain and the Netherlands as well as the commercial adversity in France created an intense competition for readership. And like in Great Britain and the Netherlands, this certainly gave the discursive innovation within the French press an important impulse.

34 Hendrik Scheffer, "De dagbladonderneming. Het nut van enige bedrijfseconomische kennis bij pershistorisch onderzoek," in *Groniek: onafhankelijk Gronings historisch studentenblad* 17, no. 82 (1982): 28.

35 Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 170-171.

36 Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 146-150, 158-163.

37 Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 312.

38 Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 180-185; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 250, 263-266; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 122-125; It would have been interesting to have also included such new and successful papers in the content analysis. This was however impossible within the time frame of this research project.

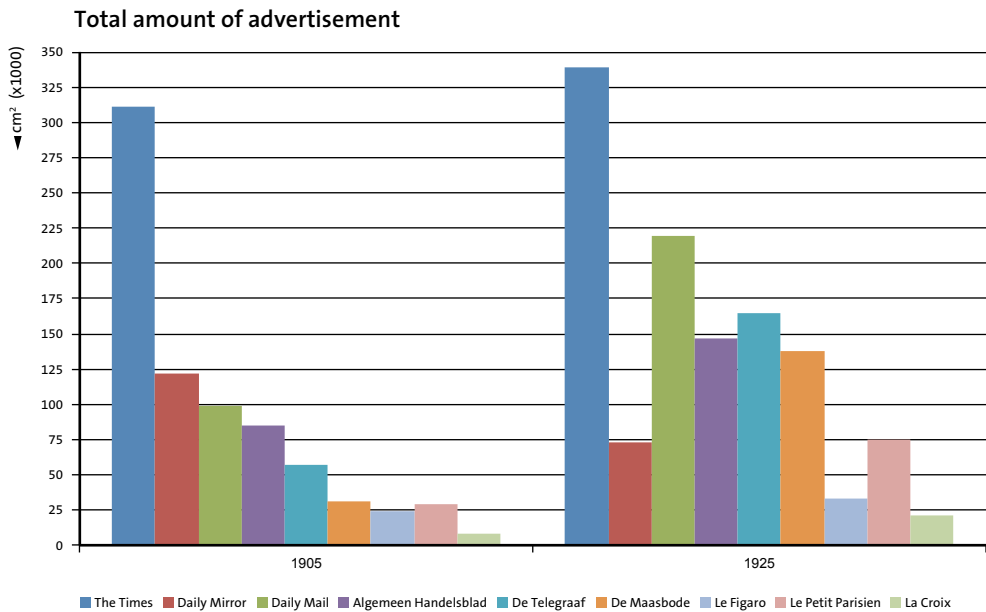
39 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 153-155.



# Advertisement, size, newshole

Advertisement revenue played a small role in the business model of the French dailies, which made their financial situation even harder. Whereas in Britain and the Netherlands advertisement revenue kept on growing and played an increasingly important role in the profitability of the press, their French counterparts saw a much smaller growth in this respect (Graphs 6.1 & 6.2). Chalaby has estimated that only between 20% and 25% of the total revenue of a daily was brought in by advertisement.<sup>40</sup> The problems with attracting advertisers, due to the already mentioned characteristics of the French society, were reinforced by the deteriorated reputation of the dailies after the war. For these reasons, the French dailies missed out on the financial and independence that the advertisement revenues offered the Dutch and British press.<sup>41</sup> Subsequently, the French dailies had more difficulties coping with the overhead costs and to keep afloat many dailies had to raise their cover price. These price changes subsequently had a negative effect on the circulation figures. It is therefore not surprising that the few dailies that were able to maintain a lower cover price experienced an increase of their circulation, on which they depended so heavily.<sup>42</sup> The image of the commercial differences between the three countries is supported by the results of the content analysis regarding the amount of advertisement in the respective dailies.

Graph 6.1

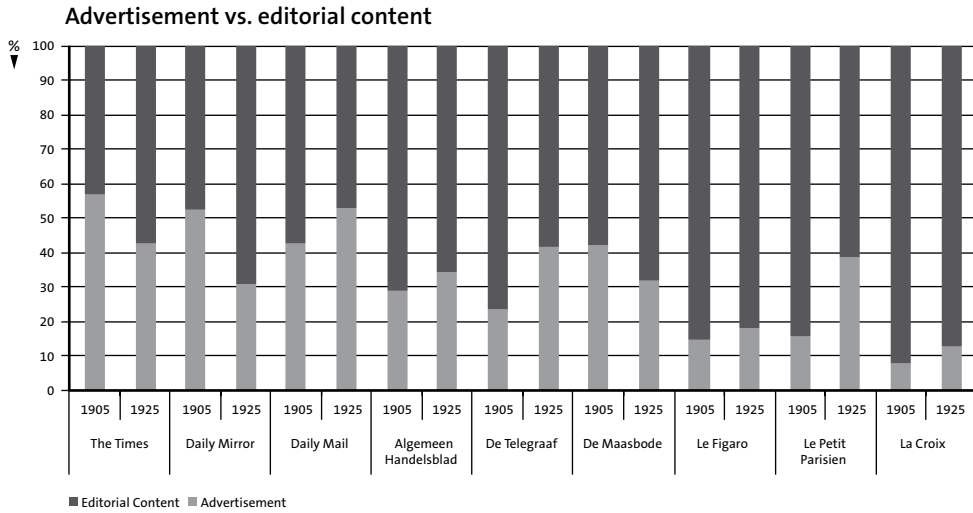


<sup>40</sup> Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 133-135; Unfortunately, information about the part of the total revenue that can be accounted to advertisement is scarce.

<sup>41</sup> Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 255-257; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 82-83.

<sup>42</sup> Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 253-255; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 164-165.

Graph 6.2



The first graph shows that the French dailies published the least amount of advertisement. Only *Le Petit Parisien* was not as far behind in this respect. Because *Le Petit Parisien* was a popular daily, it maintained a relatively strong position with still a rather high circulation up until the second half of the 1930s. Furthermore, these results reinforce the image of the *Mirror* as a paper in decline. They also suggest that in spite of the commercially ailing position of *The Times*, its authoritative position as the paper of the affluent elite still attracted the most amount of advertisement of all the nine dailies. This saved the daily from bankruptcy as papers with a much more 'healthy' circulation still withered away.<sup>43</sup> The relative figures of the space devoted to advertisement also reinforce the difference between the countries. However, in particular the development of *The Times* suggests that the commercial appeal of the established 'serious' dailies seems to have shifted slightly in favor of the popular dailies.

Like in the period before the war, the dailies that were relying more and more on advertisement also show the largest increase in the number of pages. The increase in size clearly shows that the French dailies remained rather small in comparison to its British and Dutch counterparts. In 1925 *The Times* ranged between the 20 and 30 pages, with occasionally an additional supplement, which could bump the number of pages up to 50 or more. The *Daily Mirror* ranged between 16 and 24 pages, and the *Daily Mail* generally consisted of 16 pages. It should be noted that the *Mirror* was the only daily printed in a smaller tabloid size, which made it effectively the smallest of the three. The Dutch dailies grew as well, and were comparable to the *Mail* ranging mostly between 12 and 16 pages although *Algemeen Handelsblad* occasionally published 18 pages. The French newspapers showed a slight increase ranging from 6 to 8 pages, where *La Croix* always stuck to 6 and *Le Figaro* occasionally consisted of 10 pages.

<sup>43</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 136, 148; Startt, "Good Journalism," 280-284; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 170-174.

Table 6a

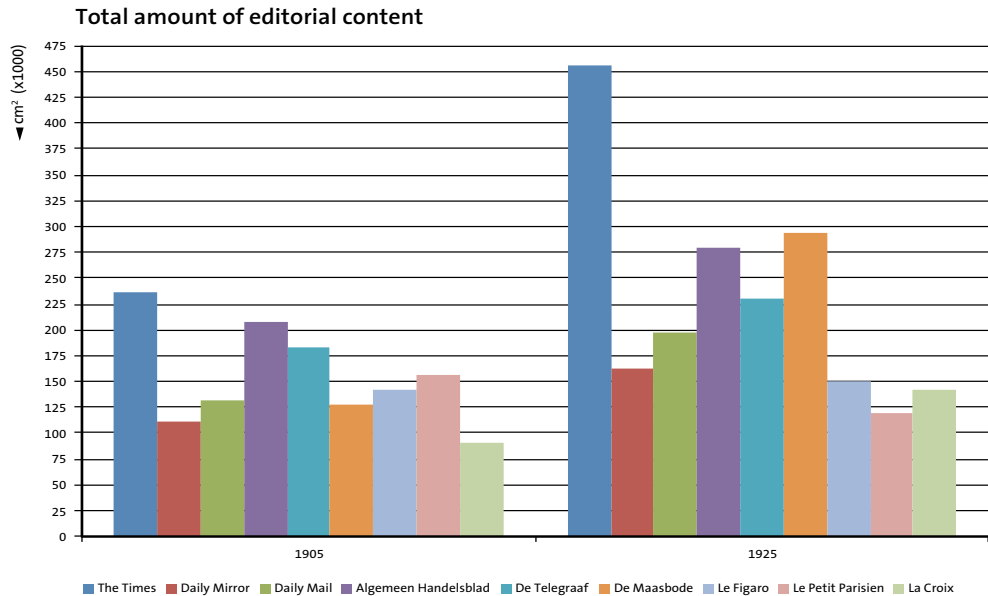
Number of pages		1905	1925
Great Britain	The Times	16-20	20-30
	Daily Mirror*	16	16-24
	Daily Mail	8-10	12-16
The Netherlands	Algemeen Handelsblad	10-12	12-18
	De Telegraaf	6-8	8-16
	De Maasbode	6-8	12-16
France	Le Figaro	6-8	6-10
	Le Petit Parisien	6	6-8
	La Croix	4	6

\*published on tabloid format

Besides the smaller amount of advertisement influencing the size of the dailies, the high price of paper in France, which was thirty times higher than before the war, also put restrictions on the size of the dailies up until the 1930s.<sup>44</sup>

Like in the prewar period, the varying role advertisement played in the dailies in relation to the increase in the number of pages did not mean a directly proportionate increase in the amount of the editorial content as graph 6.3 illustrates. Still, the difference between the French dailies and the others had grown by 1925. Only *La Croix* showed an increase in the size of its newshole. Yet, in *Le Petit Parisien* the amount of editorial content even decreased somewhat in spite of the growing number of pages it published.<sup>45</sup>

Table 6.3



<sup>44</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 163-164; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 248.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 305.

## Professionalizing journalism

Besides the size differences, the interplay between the improving technology, the growing status of reporters, and the need to attract readership incited a further development with regard to the content and appearance of the dailies. For instance, the focus on a clear and vivid lay-out, including compelling photographic material, demanded more sophisticated printing equipment and was simultaneously facilitated by it. Prior research shows that this development went hand in hand with the growing importance of better skilled and more specialized printing experts. Furthermore, the need to cover all the basic fields of interests as well as excel on certain topics also resulted in a need of a growing body of specialized reporters. In Great Britain and the Netherlands the growing newshole acted as a catalyst in this respect. Still, in France the dailies also realized that a larger and more specialized staff could give them an edge on their competition and tried to expand within boundaries of their financial bandwidth.<sup>46</sup> In addition, articles by esteemed reporters and editorialists also made a daily more appealing to the public. For that reason the competition between the dailies also stretched out to their employees. Dailies tried to enroll esteemed journalists from other papers by offering them a better salary and more freedom in their choice of the stories they could cover.<sup>47</sup>

The success of *Paris-Soir* for instance cannot only be ascribed to its innovative use of pictures. The paper could also boast highly esteemed journalists on its payroll whose coverage of the traditional journalistic topics, such as politics or international relations, appealed to the readership. The paper for example had pinched Albert Londres, who was at the top of his fame, from *Le Petit Parisien* and his fellow *grand reporter* Jules Sauerwein from *Le Matin*.<sup>48</sup> In the Netherlands this is nicely illustrated by Wolf's description of the - eventually failed - launch of the Dutch daily *De Dag* by Willem Broekhuijs. Broekhuijs managed to attract many esteemed journalists, like J.C. Schröder, editor-in-chief of *De Telegraaf* and leading reporters like Johan Luger of that same paper. At first his new endeavor seemed to go smoothly. In part by the esteemed reputation of its staff, the paper managed to attract 125,000 subscriptions in advance, appealing to many eager advertisers. In the end the whole endeavor failed miserably when Broekhuijs - sabotaged by Hak Holdert - bought a printing press that could not satisfy the technological needs, nor could it print enough copies within the available time. The launch needed to be postponed, and the continuing costs that kept piling up ultimately led to the bankruptcy of the daily. Nevertheless, the virtual success of the paper suggests the growing esteem of the reporter.<sup>49</sup>

In general, the existing scholarship conveys an image of the journalistic domain in all the three countries as being in the course of creating a professional framework that marked the difference between amateurs or occasional publicists and professional journalists. On an institutional level the unions in all three countries were making arrangements with regard to working conditions, wages, and social benefits and tried to gain official recognition of journalism as a profession.<sup>50</sup> The characteristics of the professionalization were less uniform. The way the editorial staff and the newsroom were organized differed considerably between British journalism on the one side and French and Dutch journalism on the other. These differences are intricately related to the growing divergence of the professional ideals.

In British journalism, the professionalization included an increasing division of labor within the

<sup>46</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 156-159; Murdock & Golding, "Structure, ownership," 131; Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 158-159; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 173-174, 197-200; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 273-274.

<sup>47</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 182-183; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 174-178; Taylor, *Great Outsiders*, 31-45.

<sup>48</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 182-183.

<sup>49</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 174-178.

<sup>50</sup> Elliot, "Professional ideology," 174-175, 189; Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 158-159; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 61-78.

journalistic production process. This meant that the autonomy of the reporters was curtailed in favor of the power of the news editor. As Williams puts it:

Reporters were increasingly relegated to the role of gatherers of material, 'news hounds', while the masters of the news hunt were the sub-editors or 'rewrite' men and women who put the stories into shape as they organized the layout of the newspaper.<sup>51</sup>

Conversely, press historians have demonstrated that the accounts of the reporters in France and the Netherlands remained much more their independent work, which links up their belief that reporters and literary writers were hand and glove. From that perspective editing a reporter's account meant tampering with something that was considered to be a form of artistic unity.<sup>52</sup>

Some scholars have recognized this divergent outlook in the way journalism in the different countries dealt with the issue of anonymity of the author of an article. In the British serious press anonymity was broadly enforced up until the 1960s, whereas in the French and Dutch (serious) press it was much more common to mention the names of the reporter in the bylines of especially larger articles.<sup>53</sup> Christian Delporte points to this disparity to illustrate the divergent outlook on journalism in France and Britain:

Thus, journalism, in the course of renewing itself, remains in touch with its foundations. The perspective expressed by foreign observers at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century confirms the identity of the French press. Making no distinction between the partisan journalism of the past and today's information journalism, between the classicism of the *chronique* and the modernity of the reportage, our Anglo-Saxon colleagues show unanimous amazement about the primacy in the hexagonal sheets that is given to writing at the cost of investigating, a scarcity of information, the singular emphasis on interpretation. Whereas in England, notes Spender, the articles in the *Westminster Gazette* are strictly anonymous, reflect the editorial line of the paper, in France, where the articles are generally signed, journalists "speak for themselves". In the one case, the journalist is defending his "reputation", in the other "he feels the obligation of a sacrifice: the denial of his personality".<sup>54</sup>

Delporte implicitly argues that in France journalistic articles were intertwined with the subjectivity of the reporter, which is why his or her reputation is at stake in writing a journalistic account. By contrast in Britain the subjectivity of the reporter is filtered out of the account. The choice with regard to the anonymity of journalists thus reflects the way journalists in both countries deal with the issue of the mediating subjectivity of the reporter. As the quote above suggests the French and the British deal with this issue in opposite ways - how exactly will be the focus of the following chapter.

This divergent perspective on journalism practice is reinforced by the nature of the discussions on journalism education. In the Netherlands Van Vree has shown that there was a strong resistance to the suggestion of educating journalists. The opponents were worried that this would stimulate the dailies to replace the colorful and thought-provoking individuality of journalistic articles with a

<sup>51</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 147.

<sup>52</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 238-240; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 121-127; Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 44.

<sup>53</sup> Colin Seymour-Ure, *The British Press and Broadcasting since 1945* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 135-136; cf. Zvi Reich, "Constrained Authors: Bylines and Authorship in news reporting," *Journalism* 11, no.6 (2010): 707-725; Another indication for the lower status of the reporter can also be found in the lack of scholarly attention for particular British journalists, which is a rather large contrast with the Dutch and certainly the French press historiography.

<sup>54</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 73-74.

“bland uniformity”.<sup>55</sup> The press agencies symbolized this type of ready-made journalism that would fit any daily regardless of its ideological orientation. The growing success of these agencies therefore fostered the concern for the value of creativity and stylistic individuality. The same goes *a fortiori* for the debate in France about this issue. A reporter needed to capture reality in text by synthesizing many different elements:

[I]mpregnation on site, the collection of facts, various introductory readings; then the critical construction of the whole for which synthesizing and differentiating capacities are necessary; finally, a rich restitution requiring originality, personality and talent.<sup>56</sup>

A journalist was thus still considered to be - at least in part - an artist with a predisposition for capturing the essence of the things they observed.<sup>57</sup> Many journalists believed that these literary qualities could not be taught. Nonetheless, the longing for improvement of the status of journalism and a better demarcation as a profession led to the first initiatives for some form of journalism education in this period. Most study programs offered no practical training though, but rather equipped the students with broad knowledge of the different fields of society, such as politics, economics and arts. Knowledge of these topics was regarded as beneficial to a practicing journalist.<sup>58</sup> The British also displayed reluctance towards a journalistic education, but from a different perspective. As research into journalism education in Britain has demonstrated, they believed that journalism was a trade that could be learned rather than a matter of predisposed talent. However, it had to be learned in the field, and could not be theoretically instructed.<sup>59</sup>

Thus, the professional traditions in both countries show certain clear disparities in the outlook on their occupation. In Great Britain journalism was gradually adopting a professional structure in which the autonomy of the reporter had lost its prominence to the rationalized division of labor. Through this process the subjectivity of the reporting process was filtered out of the accounts and in this partial sense, British journalism drew closer to the journalistic conception of the objectivity regime.<sup>60</sup> In the Netherlands and especially France this prominence of the editor and subeditors made less headway, and journalism was more organized around the ideal of the *grand reporter*, which maintained its artistic autonomy with regard to his or her accounts.<sup>61</sup> It is therefore not surprising that the status of individual reporters was more important in the Netherlands, and particularly in France.

## Moving away from the vertical logic

The progress on the technological level together with the growing competition made an attractive and well-structured newspaper increasingly important in the inter-war years. The development concerning layout and the integration of images advanced quickly, but with several important differences between countries and between the popular and serious dailies as well. My analysis

<sup>55</sup> Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 42-44.

<sup>56</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 115.

<sup>57</sup> Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 42-44; Myriam Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter au coeur des années trente* (Villeneuve d'Ascq Cédex: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2004), 59-68.

<sup>58</sup> Van Vree, “Beroep: journalist,” 159-160; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 277-283.

<sup>59</sup> Beate Josephi, “Journalism Education,” in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, ed. Thomas Hanitsch & Karin Wahl Jorgenson (New York/London: Routledge, 2009), 43-50.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Hampton, “The ‘objectivity’ ideal,” 482-483; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 161-164.

<sup>61</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 98-115; Van Vree, “Beroep: journalist,” 159-160.

shows that the layout of the dailies in general was becoming much more dynamic and attractive in this period, and was adapted more easily to the specific needs of the articles on a page. The 1930s marked the end of the vertical layout and the embrace of the photo as a key element of the newspaper, but in the 1920s these changing characteristics already announced themselves, showing which dailies led the way.<sup>62</sup>

Of all papers, *The Times* was clearly the most reluctant in this respect. The daily had a particularly conservative attitude and remained close to the principles of the vertical layout and only published very modest headlines that generally did not exceed the width of one column. Yet, press historians have pointed to some modest changes. In 1932 the paper however could no longer ignore the visual changes in newspaper journalism and - after long deliberation - made some, still modest, changes in their visual appearance by adopting a new font called 'Times New Roman', using a greater variety in font sizes, and allowing the publication of larger pictures.<sup>63</sup> In comparison, these changes were minor. All other papers really exploited the possibilities of a livelier layout and gradually abandoned the vertical logic. They used broad and bold headlines covering multiple columns, and the articles were interspersed with smaller paragraph headings. Especially, on the front page, which by this time had really become the signpost of a newspaper, the visual features were exploited. *The Times* and the *Mail* were exceptions in this respect, as they still published advertisement on the front page (see front pages on pages 208-224).<sup>64</sup>

In the Dutch press the dailies had drawn closer and the visual differences were not that large in this respect. The growing success of *De Telegraaf* before the First World War had made other dailies follow suit in this respect, and in the inter-war years the different dailies had a rather uniform layout. However, in the other countries the popular papers were more advanced in this respect than their 'serious' counterparts. Especially *Le Petit Parisien*, which had been among the front-runners before World War I, introduced visual innovations early on. By 1925 the daily had already let go of the vertical logic and especially on the front page it regularly published photos directly next to the articles. In a period in which pictures were still suspect and they were mostly published on separate photo pages, this was particularly advanced.<sup>65</sup>

In general, the inter-war period was also the period in which photographic material came to play an important part in the newspaper. The data supports the idea that printing pictures quickly became a widely used strategy to appeal to readers and stay ahead of the competition.<sup>66</sup> This development was stimulated by the rise of cinema, which made the public increasingly familiar with pictorial material. This made many dailies aware of the importance of visuals, impacting how these dailies regarded pictorial content that moment onwards.<sup>67</sup>

As the existing scholarship argues, not all photos that were published in these newspapers were solely focused on representing the most newsworthy events caught on camera by on-site photojournalists. A lot of dailies mostly published pictures that only offered a static representation of an event. Such pictures were aimed to enliven a story rather than adding newsworthy information to it. Instead of publishing a picture of a large and devastating fire the dailies often published only a portrait of a person involved or instead of capturing a political assembly in progress a paper would only print a picture of the venue where the event would take place. Press historians have partly

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 177; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 158; Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 184-185.

<sup>63</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 158.

<sup>64</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 156-157; Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 183; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 229.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 145; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 163.

<sup>66</sup> In this competition not only the amount of pictures played a role, but also the quality. *Paris-Soir* for instance is said to partly owe its success to the high quality of its images, cf. Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 182.

<sup>67</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 157-159; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 151-153, 163-165; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 176.

attributed this to the still heavy and not that technologically advanced photographic equipment that was in use in the 1920s, which had a laborious post-process. The introduction of the pocket camera in this period solved this problem and made photojournalists much more dynamic, which is reflected in the pictures that could more easily capture an event as it happened.<sup>68</sup> However, such innovations generally first took place in specialized photo magazines and did not immediately find their way to the large national dailies. Especially the serious press kept a reticent attitude towards pictures.<sup>69</sup> Their reluctance reinforced the idea that pictures were the domain of the less esteemed popular press and thwarted the acceptance of pictures as a serious journalistic means of providing information. This attitude made it hard for photojournalists working for newspapers to disprove these claims, as these papers did not invest in the means necessary to improve the speed and quality of their pictures. In the serious press, pictures were considered to be superficial and sensational ways of attracting readership instead of considering them as a sound way to enrich the journalistic coverage. For that reason the informative value of photos was doubted and they were still seen as an element of the larger development in which the public needed to be entertained rather than informed. This is part of the reason why the status of photos in the newspaper was still not beyond reproach within journalistic discourse and kept on inciting debate.<sup>70</sup>

This analysis finds clear support in my results about the role pictures played in the different dailies (Graph 6.4). With regard to the total amount of pictures that were published the popular British dailies were miles ahead of the rest. Yet, the absolute numbers give a somewhat distorted image, because the large differences in newspaper size are not discounted. It is therefore more insightful to look at the share of the daily that is filled with pictures. These results show that mainly the British popular dailies reserved a much larger part of the newspaper for photographs than the other dailies - with the *Mirror* at an unparalleled level. Still, these percentages show that by 1925 *Le Petit Parisien* - although on a smaller scale - also clearly differed from its serious French counterparts. This speaks for the innovative attitude of the popular dailies in this respect.

The Dutch press however goes against this general tendency, showing that popular dailies are not always the frontrunners. The Dutch dailies were relatively late with the publication of photo pages.<sup>71</sup> Although Wolf has shown that *De Telegraaf*, after a feverish race against the clock, scooped *Algemeen Handelsblad*, by publishing the first photo page in 1921, this does not take away from the fact that the latter paper came up with the idea before *De Telegraaf*.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, the graph above shows that *Algemeen Handelsblad* devoted more attention to photos in their - also more sizeable - daily, which refutes the generally accepted claim that *De Telegraaf* was ahead of the competition concerning the use of images.<sup>73</sup>

68 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 163-164; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 229-230; cf. Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 141, 173-174.

69 Becker, "Photojournalism," 135-139; cf. Loup Langton, *Photojournalism and today's news. Creating visual reality* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 28-30.

70 Becker, "Photojournalism," 132-139; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 164-165.

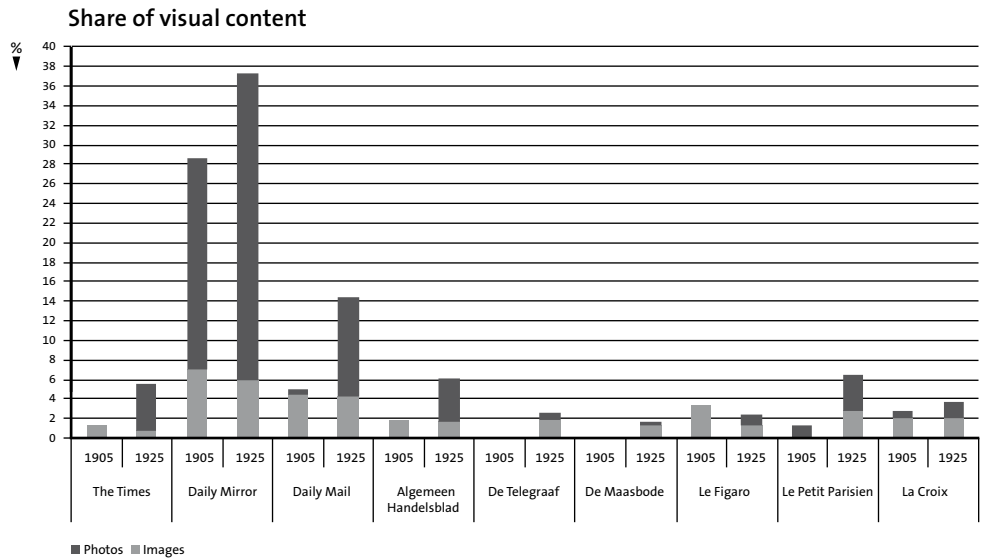
71 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 145; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 163.

72 Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 184-185.

73 Cf. Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 184-185; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 163.



Table 6.4



Overall, with the exception of *De Telegraaf*, especially the popular dailies boosted innovations concerning images and layout. The *Mail* and *Mirror* were among the first to integrate photographic material on a large scale, and can certainly be seen as innovative. However, with regard to layout and the integration of images next to the articles *Le Petit Parisien* was just as an important innovator in the inter-war period to say the least.

## Finding an unique selling point, while heeding the competition

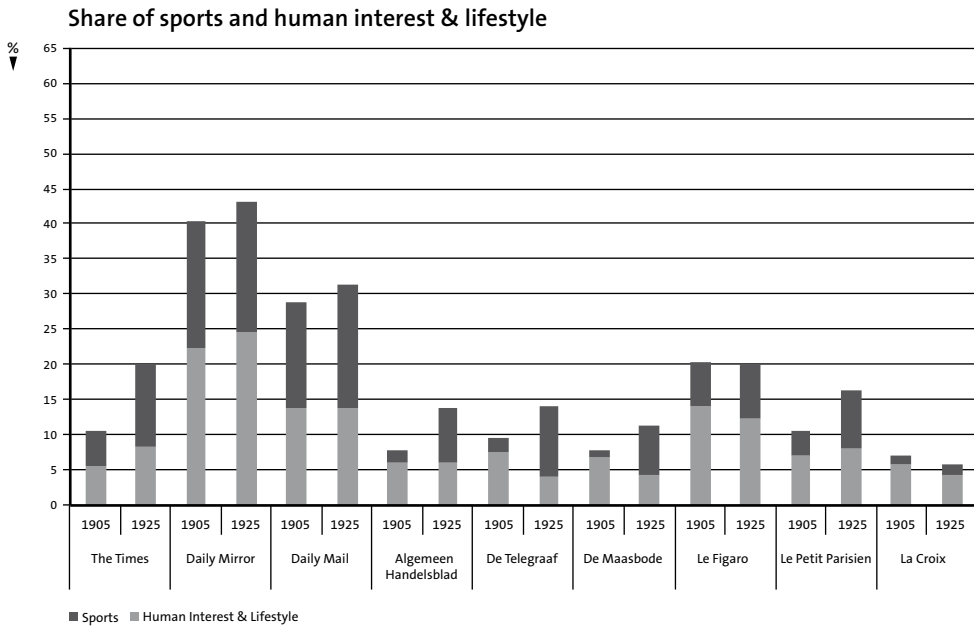
Whereas the layout of the papers and their use of visual material showed clear-cut differences, the disparities that my results convey in topical focus of the respective dailies suggest a more complex interaction between the serious and the popular dailies (Graph 6.5). By 1925 the diversification of the editorial content, which had first manifested in the *Mirror* and the *Mail*, and - although in a different way - in *Le Figaro* and *Le Petit Parisien*, had spread to most of the other dailies as well by 1925. Only *La Croix* showed hardly any change in its topical focus. The differences between the ‘serious’ and the popular press had certainly not vanished. As the dailies remained entangled in a commercial competition and ongoing negotiation over the norms, routines, and forms of journalism they grew closer to each other on a basic level. In the inter-war period the growing dominance of the popular dailies forced the serious press to follow their journalistic lead. The ‘serious’ press could not ignore the changes in journalism that had been introduced by the popular press, and to a certain extent their adoption of some of the new characteristics helped making them more accepted. Thus, in spite of the remaining differences, a basic blueprint of the content and appearance of a daily emerged.<sup>74</sup>

The same competition that led to this standardization forced dailies to stand out from their

<sup>74</sup> Broersma, “Botsende stijlen” 56-64; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 141; Chalaby suggests a widening gap between popular and serious dailies. Whereas I do not entirely disagree with the widening gap between the serious and popular dailies, I would argue Chalaby disregards the convergent incentives that are also visible, cf. Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 168-170.

competition in order to attract readership; they had to find their unique selling point. Perhaps somewhat paradoxically, the commercial competition thus incited both converging and diverging developments. As a result dailies tried to create or reinforce a particular journalistic profile, but their freedom to 'stand out' was delimited by the shared 'blueprint', which prescribed the topics a newspaper had to devote attention to.<sup>75</sup> This 'diverged convergence' can clearly be seen in the attention devoted to sports and human interest and lifestyle.

Graph 6.5



Both the *Mirror* and the *Mail* devoted by far the most attention to sports and to human interest and lifestyle, but between 1905 and 1925 the relative amount of attention they devoted to these topics had more or less consolidated. This somewhat contradicts Williams' conclusion that the inter-war period meant a rise of the human interest story in Britain - relatively speaking at least. It also contradicts his claim that *The Times* did not change in this respect.<sup>76</sup> In the latter the attention for human interest increased slightly, which can be attributed to the competitive pressures. The popular dailies did not change much in this respect. Although in an absolute sense with the growing size of the dailies human interest stories also increased, the rise of the importance of this topic in the popular newspaper had been in the prewar period. This pattern is even stronger with regard to sports. Whereas the attention for sports only grew slightly in the popular dailies, the attention devoted to this topic had tripled in *The Times* by 1925. This supports the idea that even the most conservative papers could not entirely ignore the new journalistic agenda; although obviously a disparity in scale remained.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 161-163; Broersma, "Botsende stijlen," 64; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 159-160.

<sup>76</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 159-160.

Whereas the popular dailies in Britain had more or less consolidated, both the serious as well as the popular dailies on the continent still showed developments in their topical orientation. In the Dutch press human interest did not really catch on yet, and in *De Telegraaf* this topic even declined somewhat. Conversely, the attention for sports increased considerably in all the dailies, but the most in *De Telegraaf*. As press historians already pointed out, the paper advertised itself as the best sports paper and tried to stand out from the competition in this respect.<sup>77</sup>

In France *Le Figaro* already devoted more attention to sports since 1905 and only slightly increased the share of sports news in the paper, and it was *Le Petit Parisien* that needed to catch up as sports coverage had become an important topic which could attract readers.<sup>78</sup> Whereas *De Maasbode* with its reflective Catholic profile kept track of the competition and developed accordingly, *La Croix* was more conservative and did not really change its journalistic profile. An explanation for this difference can be found in the more commercial outlook on journalism of *De Maasbode* that scholars have pointed to. The paper wanted to compete with other dailies and within the framework of its Catholic profile developed therefore along the same lines as the other dailies.<sup>79</sup> The way *La Croix* is typified in the French press histories suggests that it lacked such commercial incentives and was mainly printed for ideological purposes in this period. The Catholic daily was firmly in the hands of the French Catholic church, which also financed and distributed the paper.<sup>80</sup>

Based on my analysis, it seems that the shifting focus of the serious dailies was at the expense of their traditional emphasis on political coverage. Graph 6.6 shows that the dailies within the different countries were drawing closer to each other with regard to their attention for politics. In the Netherlands the uniformity grew, which is evident in the decreasing focus on politics in *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *De Maasbode*. To a lesser extent this also applies to the developments of *The Times*, which showed a strong decline in the share of the daily that was devoted to politics. In this respect the paper drew closer to the *Mail*, which had maintained their share of political news. This decline in *The Times* was closely related to changing way in which politics was covered. As I will discuss further in the last section of this chapter political coverage was moving away from the detailed, almost minute-like recording of an event.

Whereas politics still remained an important topic in the *Mail*, it declined even further in the *Daily Mirror*. The paper's focus on a different kind of reader than *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* seems to have pushed in reducing its political coverage. That this topic still accounts for approximately 10% of the entire content suggests that even the dailies, in which politics was not the main focus, still had to integrate a certain amount of political news. The commercial adversity of the daily in this period has been explained by the political sympathies of its owner. Harold Rothermere's use of the columns of the *Mirror* to vent his admiration for fascism and Hitler and Mussolini in the 1930s is said to have had a devastating influence on the daily. However, the paper's - temporary - downfall set in earlier, which makes this explanation only partially satisfactory.<sup>81</sup> An alternative explanation is that the paper taking the popular rationale too far for the readership and offered not enough coverage of the political affairs.<sup>82</sup>

The convergence of the share of political coverage does not really apply to the French press.

<sup>77</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 171; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 195.

<sup>78</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 124-125.

<sup>79</sup> Hans Vermeulen, *De Maasbode. De bewogen geschiedenis van 'De beste courant van Nederland'* (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 1994), 66.

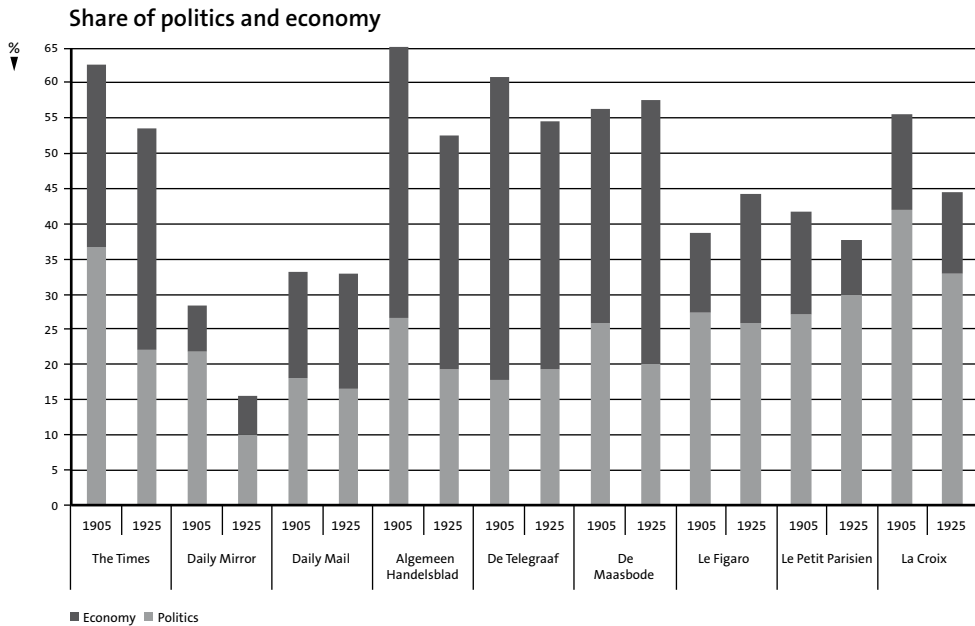
<sup>80</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 245; Not much research has been done into the history of *La Croix* and information about its development is unfortunately scarce.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 182; Horrie, *Tabloid Nation*, 36-39.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 135, 159.

Across the board politics remained a privileged topic in the French dailies. Only in *La Croix* the share of politics receded from more than 40% to a bit more than 30%. This traditional outlook on the journalistic focus of newspapers is generally seen as one of the factors that are responsible for the decline in circulation of the national press. Press historians have also suggested that the launch of *Paris-Soir* in the 1930s was the first time a daily really dethroned political coverage in the daily, whereas this topic had already lost some of its primacy in Britain and the Netherlands.<sup>83</sup>

Graph 6.6



Whereas the role of political coverage was losing prominence in the serious dailies, economic and financial matters kept playing an important part in the interwar-years. By contrast this topic only played a smaller or even marginal role in the popular dailies. This suggests that it acted as a mark of distinction for the respective dailies. Only, in the Netherlands, where the roots of journalism were firmly embedded in economic and financial news, the press in general devoted a large part of their editorial space to economy, and this topic received more emphasis than in the majority of the French and British dailies.<sup>84</sup> Still, by 1925 it had lost some of its emphasis in *De Telegraaf*.

By looking at the interaction between the serious and popular press, it thus becomes apparent that they still operate within a shared discursive framework. On a basic level the characteristics of daily standardized, and the boundaries of this blueprint restricted the freedom they had to profile themselves in a way that that differentiated them enough from the other dailies to appeal to the readership. This perspective does more justice to the codependence of the serious and the popular press and their ongoing struggle.

<sup>83</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 173-174, 178-185.

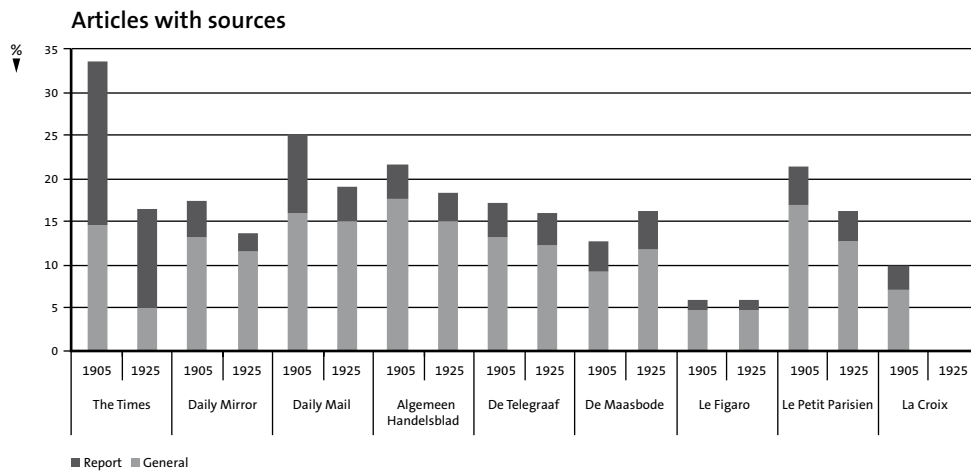
<sup>84</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 26; De Graaf, *Journalistiek in beweging*, 62.

# Active newsgathering

This complex development links up to the dependence of dailies on press agencies and in-house reporting that scholars have pointed to. World War I had shown the dangers of the fact that most papers strongly relied on the newsworthy information they purchased from news agencies and had given a boost to active reporting. Still, the labor costs of the expanding reporting staff were a heavy burden on the financial balance of a paper, and it is therefore likely that editors-in-chief made strategic choices how to employ their reporting staff.<sup>85</sup> This meant that dailies also kept relying on the thriving news agencies for their basic news coverage, which played an important part in the standardization of the dailies as they relied on the same basic coverage.<sup>86</sup>

This could also explain why according to my results the relative use of sources and direct quotes remained steady in most newspapers (Graph 6.7). Whereas most press histories claim that active reporting routines such as on-site observation and interviewing became ubiquitous within journalistic discourse, I suggest a slightly divergent and more complex interpretation. Examining the percentage of articles that attributed sources by 1925, it appears that not much had changed. Only *The Times* experienced a rather large decrease in the percentage of articles that attributed sources. Apart from the waning influence of the report as a genre, this can be partially explained by the explosion of short news reports in this paper, in which most of the time no sources were attributed (see also graphs 6.11 & 6.12).<sup>87</sup> To a lesser extent this also applies to *Algemeen Handelsblad*.

Graph 6.7



This image is confirmed by the absolute numbers, which remain more or less steady, and in some cases even decrease a little (Graph 6.8). This indicates that in the interwar years the attribution of sources did not develop into a basic practice underlying every journalistic article. I would suggest that seeking out and interviewing people was still a special routine that was reserved for the

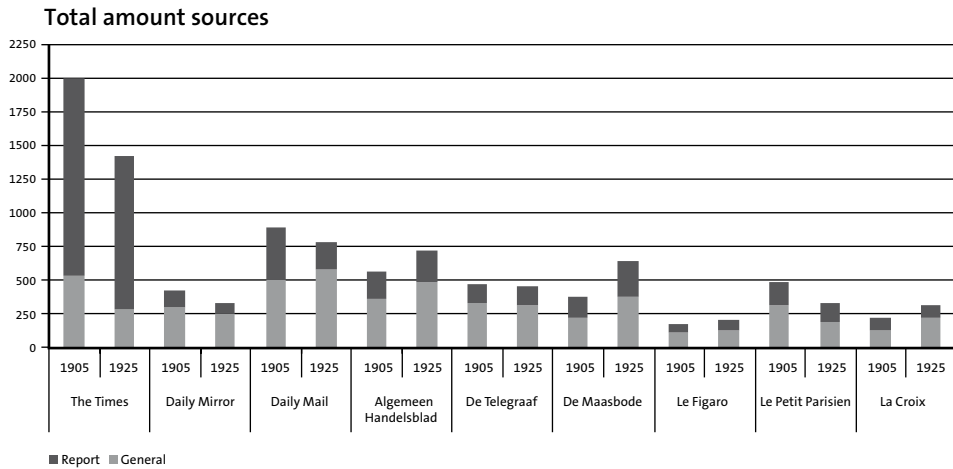
<sup>85</sup> Murdock & Golding, "Structure, ownership," 131; Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 158-159; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 161-162, 173-174, 197-200; Charle, *Siècle de la presse*, 255-257, 273-274; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 138-140, 151-155; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 170; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 106-108; cf. Elliot, "Professional ideology," 173-175; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 179-181.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 147; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 162-163.

<sup>87</sup> In 1905 an average edition of *The Times* contained 88 news reports (19 of which attributed sources), but in 1925 this had risen to 152 news reports (9 of which attributed sources).

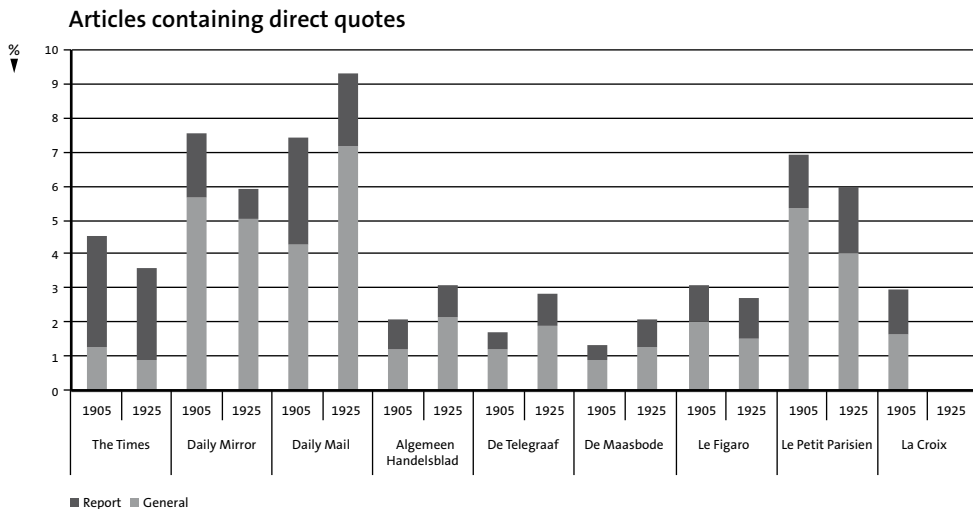
more 'high-profile' articles, in which simultaneously the standards with regard to this specific routine were gradually determined.

Graph 6.8



This idea is reinforced by the use of direct quotes in the respective dailies. Graph 6.9 shows that with the exception of the Netherlands with its uniform reticence, the divergence between the popular dailies and the serious press was maintained. The percentage level does not get above the 8%, and this level is only reached by the clear frontrunner in this respect, the *Daily Mail*. In most dailies, less than 3% of their articles contained direct quotes. Thus, in spite of small increases the share of articles containing direct quotes remained rather low and cannot be compared with the post-war dailies in which the share could go up to 25% in the popular dailies.

Graph 6.9

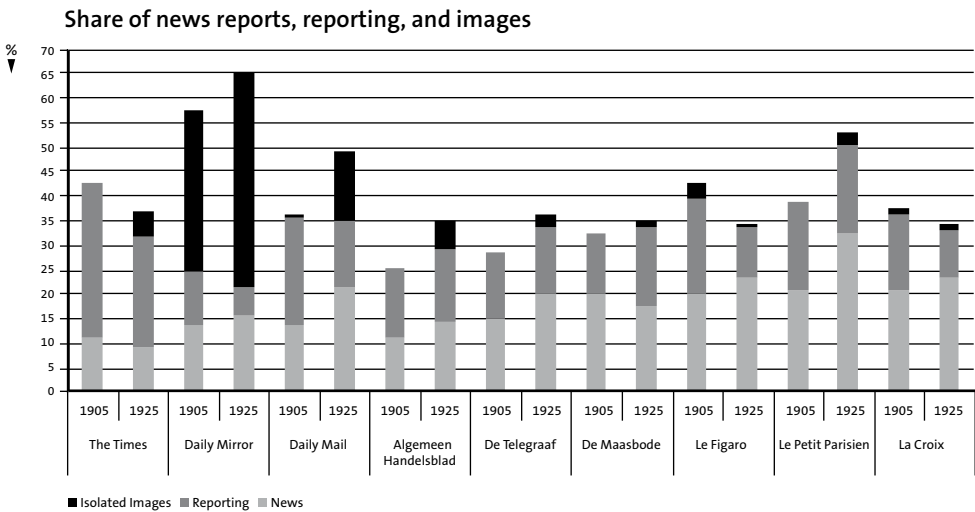


Altogether, these results indicate that the new journalistic routines, in which journalists were actively seeking out and interviewing people, were not as ubiquitous as some scholars have suggested.<sup>88</sup> The bulk of the editorial content shows no proof of the use of the new journalistic routines. In my opinion these results show how careful press historians have to be with sweeping statements about the rapid rise of the active reporting routines, and subsequently with claims about their role in a professional framework, such as the objectivity regime. I do not deny that on-site reporting and interviewing were becoming important routines, but in line with Schudson and Ekström, I argue that their overt use was not yet common practice within the European context in this period. The results of my research suggest that in the interwar period these routines were in the course of becoming important discursive strategies, with which journalists could distinguish themselves. Exactly because these routines were still considered to be somewhat out of the ordinary, they could earn them professional prestige - although they had to tread carefully to avoid reproaches of superficial sensationalism.<sup>89</sup> In France and the Netherlands this resulted in the emergence of the artistic *grand reporter* as a professional model. Conversely, in Britain, it meant the rise of a detached form of journalism, which I will discuss more in detail in the final section of this chapter and in the next.<sup>90</sup>

## More news, but not more reporting

The active reporting routines thus still rather seem the exception, than the rule, and their acceptance and certainly their implementation in everyday practice is a much more languid and complex process than is generally admitted. The growing focus on 'news' in this period that is generally emphasized is implicitly taken as shorthand for the rise of the objectivity regime. Yet, 'news' is a rather broad category of articles that is in this sense considered to be opposite to articles that express an opinion. This broad notion cannot be equated with a journalism practice in which the use of active reporting routines to gather, elicit, and verify information is the standard.

Graph 6.10



<sup>88</sup> Cf. Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 127-130; Matheson, "Birth of news discourse," 563.

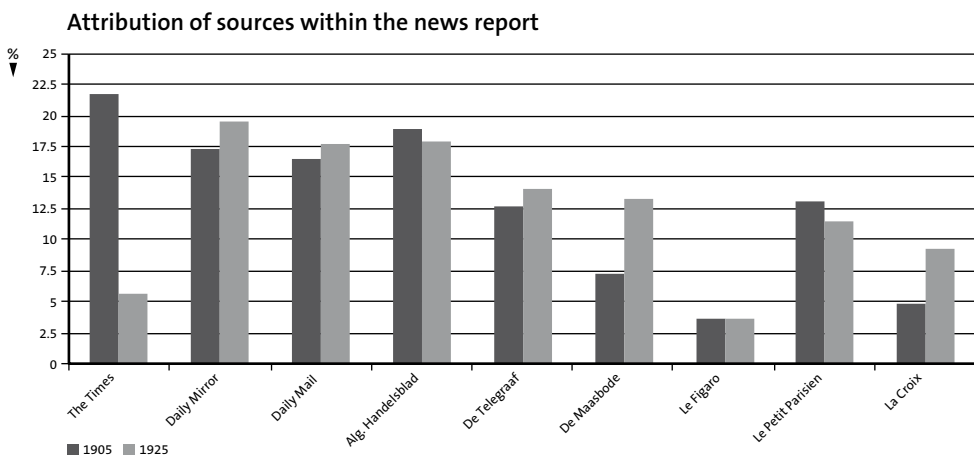
<sup>89</sup> Ekström, "Interviewing, Quoting," 21-28; Schudson, *Power of News*, 80-91.

<sup>90</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 239-240; Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 44; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 128-130.

This argument is reinforced by the image of the use of the different genres in the dailies that the results convey. The emphasis on news indeed became stronger in most dailies. However, this cannot be attributed to the typical reporting genres. In the French and Dutch dailies the share of reporting remained more or less steady and in Britain the reporting clearly declined. Graph 6.10 shows that the latter can be attributed to the waning dominance of the report, which was not compensated by more reportages or interviews.

The genre of the news report can shed more light on the nature of the developments. An interesting fact is that the space devoted to news reports grew in the *Mail* and to a lesser extent in the *Mirror* - as the news was partially covered through the photographic material which accounted for almost 45% of its content<sup>91</sup> -, whereas its share in *The Times* declined slightly. This is surprising since, as was mentioned earlier, *The Times* published many more news articles than its popular counterparts.<sup>92</sup> To say therefore that *The Times* is less focused on news is not unproblematic. On average news reports of *The Times* were in 1925 considerably shorter (23,22 cm<sup>2</sup>) than those of the *Mail* (31,05 cm<sup>2</sup>) for instance. This discrepancy between the share of news and the amount of news articles also applies to the French dailies, whereas the Dutch dailies uphold their uniform image in this respect.<sup>93</sup> This could suggest that the news reports in the popular dailies was somewhat stronger rooted in the active reporting routines, which is supported by my results (Graphs 6.11 & 6.12).

Graph 6.11



With the exception of the Netherlands the popular dailies employed active reporting routines more often than the serious dailies. Once again, the results also illustrate the uniform hesitance of Dutch journalistic discourse with regard to the integration of direct quotes. These differences might be related to the stronger financial position of the popular press, but are more likely to link up to the broader issue of the cautious attitude of the serious press with regard to these active reporting routines. These dailies preserved many elements of the journalism practice they were most familiar with.

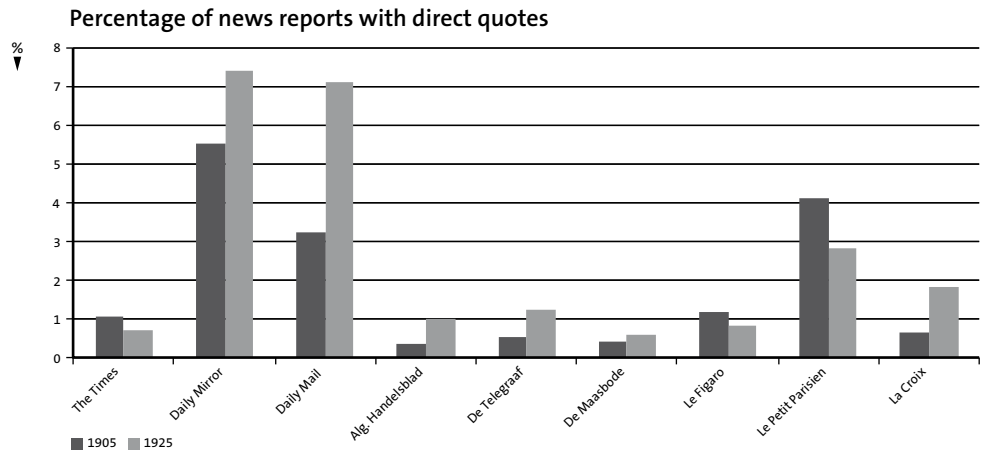
<sup>91</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 158-159

<sup>92</sup> An average of 152 news articles per paper for *The Times* against an average of 115 for the *Daily Mail*.

<sup>93</sup> The news reports in *Le Figaro* have an average size of 32 cm<sup>2</sup>, whereas those of *Le Petit Parisien* are 45 cm<sup>2</sup> on average. The Dutch dailies are again much more alike with an average of a bit more than 30 cm<sup>2</sup> for all three dailies.

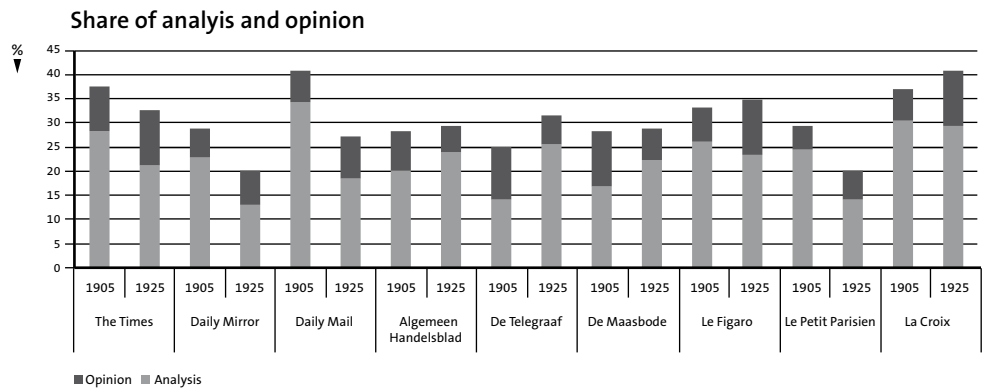


Graph 6.12



This idea is reinforced when examining the share of reflective genres in the dailies. In the French and British popular dailies the share of reflection decreased considerably between 1905 and 1925. Furthermore, a much larger portion of these articles attributed sources and contained direct quotes.<sup>94</sup>

Graph 6.13



Within the serious dailies the attention for analysis and background remained steady or declined only slightly; again *De Telegraaf* does not deviate much from its serious counterparts in this respect. In the cases of *The Times*, *Le Figaro*, and *La Croix* the share of opinionated articles even increased again. This image of *Le Figaro* and *La Croix* might be related to Eveno's analysis of the declining trust in the *presse d'information*, but can also be related to the fact that opinionated articles are generally less cost-heavy than reporting.<sup>95</sup> This twofold explanation also seems to apply to the *The Times*. Some

<sup>94</sup> Of the analyses in the French and British popular dailies between 14% and 20% contained direct quotes, whereas this was between 3% and 6% in their serious counterparts.  
<sup>95</sup> Cf. Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 103; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 172.

supporting evidence for the (re)positioning of the latter can be found in the changing ownership after Northcliffe had died. The daily had returned into the less commercially oriented hands of John Jacob Astor. He (re)appointed Geoffrey Dawson in 1923 as editor-in-chief, who had also fulfilled that position between 1912 and 1919. Dawson wanted to leave Northcliffe's journalistic conception behind and instead envisioned a more 'stodgy' paper. This entailed a shift in journalistic perspective, as *The Times* returned partly to its prior editorial policy in which newsworthy information was combined with the opinion of the intellectual elite.<sup>96</sup>

These results demonstrate once more the ongoing struggle between reflective and event-centered journalism.<sup>97</sup> In addition, these results shed an interesting light on the supposed manifestation of the objectivity regime within the British context in this period.<sup>98</sup> As I have mentioned before, scholars have often pointed to the rise of the active reporting routines as proof for the emergence of the objectivity regime as the new quality standards within journalistic discourse. The minor impact of objectivity as an explicitly formulated norm and its malleable nature, and the gradual development of these routines already cast doubt on this image of journalism history. Another argument against this instrumental connection between objectivity and an active reporting practice, is the fact that the active reporting routines manifested the strongest in the dailies that were most critiqued for the subjective, superficial and sensational way of reporting. The relation between objectivity and the popular press is considered to be problematic given the aims of these dailies to "entertain, attract and hold the attention of their readers."<sup>99</sup> Within this period the status of the active reporting routines were still rather ambivalent and were not shorthand for objective and thus trustworthy reporting, but could also be regarded as a sign of sensationalism.<sup>100</sup>

My analysis thus suggests that objectivity as a norm made less headway in the inter-war period than is often assumed in press history, and it also points to the ambivalent role of the popular press in this development. As I will discuss in chapter VIII, exactly these dailies were the ones that paved the way for the active reporting routines, but these routines became more closely connected to the objectivity regime in the postwar period.<sup>101</sup>

## The reportage: an exclusive genre

Examining the status and development of the reportage can shed some more light on the issue of objectivity and its supposed relation to the reporting norms in the respective countries (Graph 6.14). It can shed light on the way the different textual characteristics communicate certain journalistic norms within the respective countries and how these relate to the objectivity regime. My analysis shows first of all that the report still dominated the reporting genres in the inter-war years. In Britain the genre had passed its heyday and its prominent position in the dailies was declining. In the Dutch and French dailies this decline is not that obvious, but then again the genre never reached the same degree of dominance as in the British press. Interestingly, in absolute numbers the genre only decreased in the *Mirror* and in *Le Figaro* and *La Croix*, which can be explained by respectively the increasing focus on photographs and the stronger focus on reflection. The decline of the genre in

96 Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 103-104; The Office of *The Times*, *The History of The Times. The 150th Anniversary and Beyond 1912-1948. Part II 1921-1948* (London: The Author, 1952), 722-771, 793-794.

97 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 162.

98 Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 161; Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 130-140.

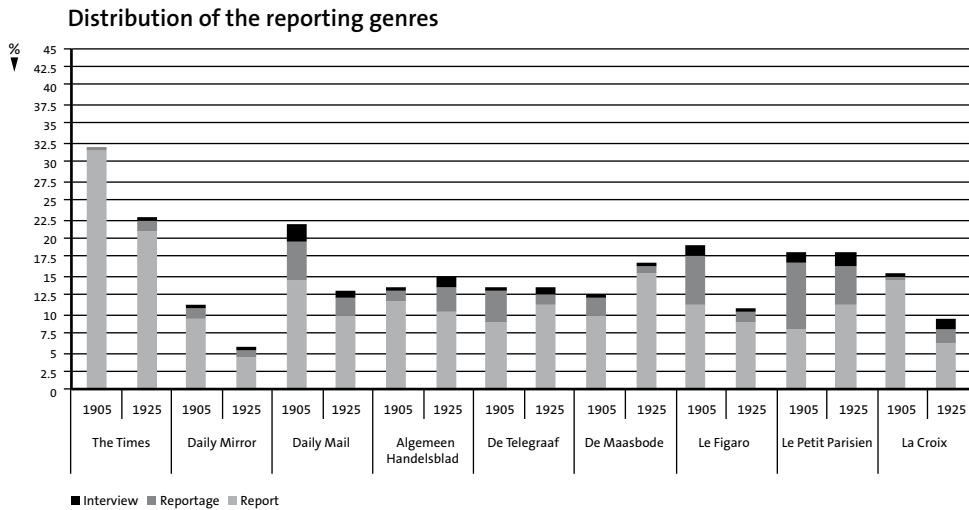
99 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 161; Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xvi-xvii.

100 Broersma, "Journalistic Strategies," xix; Høyer, "Old and New," 71-72; Williams, "Anglo-American Journalism," 18.

101 Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 483; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 145-152; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 261.

the other dailies only relates to the reportage's relative share within the newspaper. This indicates that although the genre did lose some of its prominence it was still a widely used journalistic form.<sup>102</sup>

Graph 6.14



Conversely, the interview as a textual form had not made much headway within journalistic discourse and was still an exception rather than a common sight within the newspaper. Journalists were familiar with the format and it appealed to a large part of the public. Nevertheless, as scholars have pointed out, the genre had a hard time getting rid of the objections that reporters were overstepping their boundaries by rudely invading people's privacy and also by their active part in selecting and organizing reality.<sup>103</sup> The critical tradition that has later come to be associated with this genre, in which interviewees were sometimes almost treated as hostile witnesses, had certainly not been established yet.<sup>104</sup>

With regard to the reportage the situation is slightly more complicated. Based on the results from my content analysis, this genre did not seem to grow out into an important genre. In fact, in most cases the genre even lost some ground. Yet, the quantitative perspective is not able to take into account the growing status of this genre in especially France and the Netherlands. A qualitative look at the reportages in question and the case study in the next chapter provide a better insight in the exemplary role of the interview within the process of journalistic professionalization in these countries.

As the existing research suggests, the genre did not have such a special status in Britain - which is supported by the lack of attention for the genre in the existing press research. Conversely, press historians have shown that in France and the Netherlands the genre, in particular in the form of the *grand reportage*, was gaining esteem. Practicing or publishing this genre could earn both a journalist and a paper professional esteem.<sup>105</sup> Still, the *grand reportage* was frequently published in series for which a reporter generally spent quite some time in often foreign places, making it a very

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 407.

<sup>103</sup> Ekström, "Interviewing, Quoting," 24-25; Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 154.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Brian McNair, *Journalism and Democracy. An evaluation of the political public sphere* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), 88-89.

<sup>105</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 144-146, 148-150, 170-174, 279-286; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 237-240; Wijffes, "Modernization of Style," 65-67, 71-78; Wolf, "Anglo-American Newspaper," 87-90.

costly genre. Delporte calculated that in 1933 *Le Petit Parisien* spent 32% of its entire budget on such extensive reportages.<sup>106</sup>

The high expenses that were tied to the *grand reportage* explain why it was less frequently seen in the newspaper than other genres. This also accounts for the modest role of the genre in the quantitative results. Yet, the existing scholarship suggests that the reportage also appealed to a large readership and that it therefore played an important role in the competition between the different dailies in France and the Netherlands. In the inter-war period this type of reportage often acted as an eye-catching article on the front page, which was clearly aimed at attracting readership. The status of the genre is also reflected in the popular volumes in which the reportage series were collected, and sometimes also re-edited by the journalist in question.<sup>107</sup> So although it was quite an investment for a daily, hiring a *grand reporter* often paid off in the long run.<sup>108</sup>

The *grand reportage* was the form *par excellence* in which journalistic and literary discourse were fused together.<sup>109</sup> The ideal form of journalism was, as Georges Bourdon formulated it in 1931, “a type of writing that is typical for a profession and simultaneously revives the literary spirit of the newspapers.”<sup>110</sup> In France and the Netherlands the *grand reporter* gradually came to be regarded as the embodiment of the professional ideal.<sup>111</sup> The rise of this professional model oriented on literary discourse, in which information and experience were clearly entwined, has been put forward as an important reason why objectivity as a discursive norm did not advance the same way as it did in the American press. Instead of legitimizing journalism and demarcating the field from other cultural domains by adopting the objectivity regime as a professional practice, the French and to a lesser extent the Dutch press fused the active reporting routines to their strong orientation on literary discourse. Cherishing the bonds between journalism and literature was a way for journalists to gain authority.<sup>112</sup> To dismiss this form of journalism as Chalaby does by contending it was journalism of a poor quality and illustrates the belated nature of journalistic development - which according to him is not even entitled to the predicate ‘journalism’ - altogether testifies to a normative, undifferentiated and teleological outlook on journalism history.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, the colorful way of writing relates to a different conception of objectivity influenced by literary naturalism, which I will flesh out in the next chapter.

By contrast, in Britain the genre moved further away from the type of account that would convey a reporter's subjective perception of reality. British journalists also roamed and covered the world, but during the inter-war period they gradually demonstrated a stronger emphasis on a concise and plain factual presentation of newsworthy information. As I will illustrate in more detail in the following chapter, the British press was in the course of disconnecting information from experience and following the norms of objectivity journalistic accounts were depersonalized. With these norms in mind the reportage as it was shaped in the period before was problematic in the first place with its focus on *couleur locale*, personal perception, and atmosphere. Yet, the genre was not rejected, but reshaped. The occasions that journalists wrote such accounts, they employed a detached way of

<sup>106</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 242.

<sup>107</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 311-315; Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 104-105.

<sup>108</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 291-292.

<sup>109</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 70-74, 237-240; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 103-115; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 62-65, 173.

<sup>110</sup> Georges Bourdon cited in: Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 239.

<sup>111</sup> Wijffes, “Modernization of Style,” 71-78; Wolf, “Anglo-American Newspaper,” 89-90; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 279-286; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 234-239.

<sup>112</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 237-240; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 103; Broersma, “Journalistic Strategies,” xv; Wijffes, “Modernization of Style,” 77-80; Williams, “Anglo-American Journalism,” 13; Schudson, “Objectivity norm,” 166-167.

<sup>113</sup> Chalaby, “Anglo-American Invention,” 304-313.

writing and colorful elements were only used scantily and cautiously. Still, as the narrative analysis of the next chapter shows, the British press adopted only a few characteristics, but never came to fully embrace objectivity in the same manner as American journalism.<sup>114</sup>

## Conclusion

The results in this chapter nuance the alleged differences between the countries with regard to their divergent discursive development. My analysis suggests that in particular the normative assessment of the French press as a hampered journalistic domain is determined by the institutional and commercial circumstances rather than by the results of systematic research into the journalistic texts. The results point out that *Le Petit Parisien* is as innovative discursively as its British popular counterparts, whereas all Dutch dailies show a coherent reticence to many of the novel discursive elements. The innovative attitude of *Le Petit Parisien* in spite of the general commercial adversity within the French press suggests that a fertile commercial climate is no guarantee for an innovative journalistic development nor that it works the other way around. Competition rather than affluence seems to trigger innovation.

Within this period the popular press provided an important incentive with regard to innovation. The success of the popular press made them a force to reckon with in the inter-war period. Whereas before the First World War the authority of the serious press set the standard within journalism discourse, the following period they could not ignore the changing journalism practice of their popular counterparts. These dynamics show a diverged convergence, in which a standardized blueprint of the daily emerged. Within that framework the dailies tried to find their unique selling point and large differences between the two types of dailies remained evident.

With the exception of the Netherlands, the popular dailies clearly paved the way for event-centered journalism, but also in these dailies these changes progressed only gradually. The analysis of the different elements of the daily suggests that event-centered journalism was not yet employed on a broad scale. Especially, the active reporting routines remained to play a much smaller role than is often suggested in the existing scholarship. The attribution of sources and the use of direct quotes were far from widespread, and the genres that are typically connected to the active reporting routines, like the reportage and the interview, still only played a modest role in the dailies.

In spite of the gradual pace of the developments and the minor scale on which event-centered journalism determined the newspaper content, reporting did come to determine the professional ideal in all the respective countries, but in considerably different ways. In France and the Netherlands the literary endowed *grand reporter* played a pivotal role in the conception of the profession, which can explain why the reportage developed into such an esteemed and exclusive genre that attracted a large readership and gained the reporter notoriety. Conversely, in Great Britain the detached reporter, whose subjectivity is entirely removed from the story, gained prominence. Although this relates to the rise of the objectivity regime, this notion is problematic within the journalistic context as the term itself played an ambivalent role in the debate about journalism. This is nicely illustrated by looking at the image of the dailies that show the most affinity with event-centered journalism. The reproaches these dailies received on the account of their alleged sensationalism shows that the growing focus on the active reporting routines does not automatically provide evidence for the rise of the objectivity regime. I will flesh out this issue in the next chapter by analyzing the way journalists dealt with their subjectivity in the colonial travel reportage.

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<sup>114</sup> Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 166-167; Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 482-485.



# Strangers in paradise

## The (colonial) travel reportage of the 1930s

The active reporting routines were thus not yet employed on a large scale in the inter-war period. They did however become more central in the debate about a professional journalism practice, which had been given an impulse by the First World War. This chapter analyzes how these routines played a role in the development of a professional framework and shows how loosely they were connected to objectivity as an occupational ideal. Whereas professional journalism is generally associated or even equated with the typically American conception of objective journalism, this chapter illustrates that this is an overly rigid perspective on journalistic professionalization.<sup>1</sup> In all three countries objectivity structured the debate about journalism in the sense that journalists positioned themselves vis-à-vis this ideal.

In France the concept was generally dismissed as an unwelcome American influence. The professional standards in France that had emerged at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century revolved around the ideal of the grand reporter; a journalist who roams the world and is famed for his or her penetrating and artistic representation of reality. The authority of the grand reporter resided partly in his or her independent approach to learn the truth about reality. As Delporte formulates it, using the words of contemporary journalists:

*The grand reportage embodies the relegitimization of a profession that needs it. [...] The style, as brilliant as it might be, doesn't suffice anymore like before to qualify, because now "the art of journalism is investigative reporting". Thus, a moral relegitimization, as the grand reporter restores the broken thread of journalism, which ideal is the "love of the real", the relentless pursuit of the truth "in the most superb selflessness".<sup>2</sup>*

In this process it was acknowledged that factual reporting inherently entailed the mediating subjectivity of the reporter, which therefore remained the organizing principle of the journalistic accounts.<sup>3</sup> This was also part of the reason why the authority of the reporter was still - though not solely - based on his or her literary capabilities. As the persuasiveness of the accounts' truth claim was rooted in subjective perception of the reporter, it depended on the quality of the narrative techniques with which he or she convinced the audience of the authenticity of the experience.<sup>4</sup> The French case study does indicate though that objectivity played a role in the debate on journalism. The notion was sometimes mentioned to argue against explicit value judgment within reporting and seems to have been loosely equated with impartiality within the French context.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schudson & Anderson, "Objectivity, Professionalism," 92-93.

<sup>2</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 238.

<sup>3</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 145.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 238-239; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 115, 125-128.

<sup>5</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 145.

British journalism discourse was gradually abandoning the mediating subjectivity as the organizing principle of a journalistic account, thus moving away from the key characteristics of the *grand reporter*. Professionalization revolved around the disconnection of information from the reporter's experience. Consequently, reporting in Britain adopted several traits of the objectivity regime, like concise and detached factual reporting. Still, the objectivity regime was not adopted in its entirety, for the judgment of the reporter was still considered permissible. This explains why British journalists rather talked about their obligation to uncover the truth than advocate objectivity within the debate about journalism.<sup>6</sup>

Dutch journalism seems to have been inspired by the analytic tradition of the British as well as by the French focus on authentic experience. The professional ideal of the *grand reporter* also played an important part in Dutch journalism discourse, and like in France objectivity conceived as impartiality played a role in the debate about journalism. Nevertheless, the Dutch case suggests that impartiality was not enforced in a very strict way within the pillarized press landscape of the Netherlands. The literary oriented focus on authentic experience was rather fused with the analytic judgment that characterized British journalism. Within this context, objectivity therefore seems to have had only a minor impact on journalism practice in the Netherlands.<sup>7</sup>

These divergent characteristics become apparent in reportages about the colonies or other exotic foreign countries that were written in the 1930s. The colonies and trips to foreign regions of the world had always attracted attention, but in the inter-war period several developments in different areas came together and incited a strong interest in the overseas territories. The awakening nationalism of the indigenous population put the colonies and colonialism much higher on the political agenda. The danger of a general uprising became more acute and it was therefore a politically precarious issue in the press.<sup>8</sup> European colonialism was at a crossroads and became the subject of a morally charged debate about its future.<sup>9</sup> Around this period the scientific interest in the colonies from anthropologists and ethnologists as well as a slowly budding tourism was facilitated by the rapidly improving infrastructure. Traveling to the colonies became much faster and more comfortable. The expansion of the international railway systems, the luxury liners and large freight ships that were crossing the globe - which often traded reduced fees for reporters for some publicity - and the first occasional plane flight made foreign countries, especially outside Europe, much better accessible.<sup>10</sup>

Still, only well-endowed scientists or affluent people from the societal upper class had the means and the time to undertake such long journeys. A large majority of the people in Europe could not afford to visit the colonies themselves. These circumstances made the colonies an attractive and commercially rewarding subject for newspaper journalists as well as film makers. In addition to the often state-issued and subsequently rather propagandistic documentary films and the romanticized

6 Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 482-483.

7 Wijffes, "Modernization of Style," 79; Wolf, "Anglo-American Newspapers," 93.

8 Kimberley Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina: the Objective and Picturesque Truth about French Colonialism," *Asian Journal for Social Science* 31, no.1 (2003): 25-27; Nicola Cooper, "Colonial Humanism in the 1930s. The Case of Andrée Viollis," *French Cultural Studies* 17, no.2 (2006): 194-196; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 227-228.

9 Emannuelle Radar, "Putain de colonie!" *anticolonialisme et modernisme dans la littérature du voyage en Indochine (1919-1939)* (Utrecht: [n.p.], 2008), 17-18, 127-133, 214-216, 749; Cooper, "Colonial Humanism," 65-87; Robin Butlin, *Geographies of empire: European empires and colonies, c.1880-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 577-591, 604-608; John Mackenzie, "Introduction," in *European empires and the people. Popular responses to imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy*, ed. John Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 13-14.

10 Marc Martin, "Le voyage du grand reporter de la fin du xix siècle aux années 1930," *Le Temps de médias* 8 (2007): 120-124; Butlin, *Geographies of empire*, 459-465, 471-472, 492-498; Radar, "Putain de colonie!", 279-284, 749, 755-757; Charles Burdett & Derek Duncan, "Introduction," in *Cultural Encounters. European Travel Writing in the 1930s*, ed. Charles Burdett & Derek Duncan (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 4-5; Planes were however still considered more as an interesting reporting topic than a common means of transport.

image of fictional movies, the more fact-oriented outlook and easy accessibility made newspaper coverage a popular way for people to familiarize themselves with these overseas territories that were officially a part of their nation.<sup>11</sup>

The analysis of these colonial travel reportages can illustrate the way journalism practice developed in the three countries and in what way reporting was affected by the objectivity regime. The narrative characteristics that were used to depict a foreign culture to the readership shed light on the question to what extent information and experience were entwined. Furthermore, analyzing how the reporters dealt with the political dimension of colonialism elucidates the role of impartiality within the respective journalism discourses.

## Colonialism on a crossroads

In 1931 France successfully organized a colonial exposition, which lasted for half a year and sold over 33 million tickets. Since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century such expositions had been organized regularly by different colonizing countries, under which Great Britain and the Netherlands.<sup>12</sup> These events enabled the organizing country, as well as the other countries that participated in it, to show off the grandeur of their colonial empire as well as offer a closer look at the foreign cultures that were part of it. In large exhibition spaces divided per country, typical examples of these foreign cultures were rebuilt to make the European population acquainted with the colonial world. The popularity of the expositions shows the general interest for these overseas territories. To reinforce their colonial policies, the national governments started actively informing their citizens about their colonies. Schools were given the task of making the younger generation acquainted with colonial history and culture, and in general governments produced imperial propaganda to inform their citizens.<sup>13</sup> The French edition however is particularly memorable for its unequalled size, but even more because it marks a transitional period in colonial history.

The growing ubiquity of the colonies within the different national cultures made people more curious about these other countries and parts of the world that were still fairly unknown to them. Reporting on what happened in the far edges of the world was considered to be one of the tasks of the press, but such often exciting stories about foreign parts of the world also attracted a large crowd as they spoke to the imagination of the readers.<sup>14</sup> Since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century travel journalism had emerged in tandem with the first foreign correspondents, who often published accounts of their travels as well. Within this rather amorphous body of texts there was hardly any distinction yet between literary travel stories, scientific reports of foreign cultures, personal

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- 11 Martin, "Le voyage du grand reporter," 124-128; Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 122-131; Gerard Termorshuizen, *Realisten en reactionairen. Een geschiedenis van de Indisch-Nederlandse pers. 1905-1942* (Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 2011), 135-136; David Slavin, *Colonial Cinema and Imperial France, 1919-1939: White Blind Spots, Male Fantasies, Settler Myths* (London: JHU Press, 2001), 58-60; cf. Maurizio Cinquegrani, "Travel Cinematography and the Indian City: The Imperial Spectacle of Geography at the End of the Long Nineteenth Century," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 32, no.1 (2010): 65-69; Chandrike Kaul, *Reporting the Raj: The British Press and India, c. 1880-1922* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 60-82.
  - 12 John Mackenzie, "Passion or Indifference? Popular imperialism in Britain: continuities and discontinuities over two centuries," in *European empires and the people. Popular responses to imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy*, ed. John Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 74-77; Vincent Kuitenbrouwer, "Songs of an imperial underdog: imperialism and popular culture in the Netherlands, 1870-1960," in *European empires and the people. Popular responses to imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy*, ed. John Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 101; Berny Sèbe, "Exalting Imperial Grandeur: the French empire and its metropolitan public," in *European empires and the people. Popular responses to imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy*, ed. John Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 35-37.
  - 13 Mackenzie, "Introduction," 14; Sèbe, "Exalting Imperial Grandeur," 35-36; Kuitenbrouwer, "Imperial underdog," 101-102; Mackenzie, "Passion or indifference," 58-59.
  - 14 Cf. Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 145-149.



eyewitness accounts, travel letters or memoirs. The perspective on these foreign lands and cultures in most texts was typified by a strong romantic exoticism and orientalism.<sup>15</sup>

By the inter-war period this was changing, as journalism was gradually setting itself apart from other cultural domains. Apart from the exotic appeal of these foreign realms, there was another reason why reporters and correspondents were sent to the colonies. Although colonialism was still very much a given within a European context, the attention for and worries about the social environment of the colonized population were increasing. Throughout the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the nationalistic feelings of the indigenous population had been growing and the debate about colonialism within Europe had also been ignited.<sup>16</sup> The newspaper reporters were expected to give a truthful image of colonial society that offered insight in its social, economic and political situation over there.<sup>17</sup>

This shift was related to the growing empathy and engagement with the colonized population. Under influence of the rise of the nation state, and the increasing competition between the European countries, in which the colonial empires were seen as a valuable addition to their status, the colonies were gradually subjected to the colonizers rules in their entirety.<sup>18</sup> Since the First World War, with its protracted diplomatic settlement, the world had - relatively speaking - become much smaller and the outlook of nations and their respective population was increasingly internationally oriented. The colonies, which for a long time had not been considered part of the colonizing nation, came to be more included in the national consciousness of the European countries.<sup>19</sup> They were no longer only considered a convenient source of income, but they were also regarded as an important factor in the international prestige of a nation.<sup>20</sup>

The stronger integration of the colonial realm into their European 'metropole' meant that the colonies were increasingly seen as an integral part of the nation. As a result, the indigenous inhabitants of these countries were, to a certain limited extent, also considered to be part of French, Dutch or British society. From that perspective, the government had a certain responsibility to care for the indigenous population and educate them. These ideas were fueled by the emerging awareness of national identity, together with the popular ideas of social Darwinism, in which the European population was considered to be higher up on the scale towards civilization - although vis-à-vis the rapidly developing modern European society, the primitive authenticity of the colonial society was also appreciated.<sup>21</sup>

Partially under influence of improving education and living standards of the colonized people, a growing national consciousness emerged in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in which the colonial oppression was condemned. The colonial rule met with increasing violent and nonviolent resistance throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which only fueled and fostered a growing nationalism.

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- 15** Jill Steward, "'How and Where to Go': The Role of Travel Journalism in Britain and the Evolution of Foreign Tourism, 1840-1914," in *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity, Conflict*, ed. John Walton (Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2005), 39-46; Clive Christie, "British Literary Travelers in Southeast Asia in an Era of Colonial Retreat," *Modern Asia Studies* 28, no.4 (1994): 675-677; Nicola Cooper, *France in Indochina. Colonial Encounters* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2001), 117-130; Sèbe, "Exalting Imperial Grandeur," 38-42; McKenzie, "Passion or Indifference," 75-76; David Spurr, *The rhetoric of empire: Colonial discourse in journalism, travel writing, and imperial administration* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 4-8.
- 16** Butlin, *Geographies of Empire*, 577-590, 604-608; Mackenzie, "Introduction," 13-15; Radar, "Putain de colonie!", 17-18, 127-133, 214-216, 749.
- 17** Cf. Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 122.
- 18** Butlin, *Geographies of Empire*, 17-37, 67-68, 86-88, 89-95, 577-591, 604-608; Cooper, *France in Indochina*, 11-26; Cooper, "Colonial humanism," 65-87; Mackenzie, "Introduction," 13-14; Healey, "Andrée Violis in Indochina," 25-26.
- 19** Mackenzie, "Introduction," 14; cf. Martin, "Le voyage du grand reporter," 122.
- 20** Butlin, *Geographies of empire*, 17-20.
- 21** Kuitenbrouwer, "Songs of an imperial underdog," 94-99; Sèbe, "Exalting Imperial Grandeur," 27-28, 35-36; Mackenzie, "Introduction," 3-5, 13-15; Mackenzie, "Passion or Indifference," 67-68, 75-77.

The 1930s can be seen as the hinge point where the popularity of the colonial system was at its peak, but the propagandistic rhetoric about the colonies could not hide the fact that these empires had started to show breaches that would eventually lead to decolonization.<sup>22</sup> It is this ambivalence that is reflected in the colonial exposition in Paris in 1931. Its popularity has been interpreted as the persisting dominance and general acceptance of the colonial system. At the same time this event is also regarded as an example of the countries' rhetorical tooting of their own colonial horn to mask and drown the swelling nationalistic resistance within the colonies. Like Britain and the Netherlands, France tried to keep up the image of a European nation to reckon with, but which had the best intentions with regard to the indigenous population.<sup>23</sup>

One way of making the foreign familiar was showing the interaction between the colonizer and the colonized. Especially with the growing emphasis on professionalism and independence, the dailies could play an important part in providing a truthful picture of the situation in the colonies. By also focusing on the societal and social issues, they could shed light on the growing tension in the colonies.<sup>24</sup> It is not surprising that the Dutch and French reporters covering the colonies were the esteemed *grand reporters* who were praised for their independent perspective on the world. Moreover, these expensive trips ultimately needed to be worthwhile financially, which is why only the 'lucky few', whose work appealed to a large audience, were sent over there.<sup>25</sup> In the British press the colonies were covered differently: reportages were generally written by a regular correspondent who was stationed there. These correspondents did tend to travel around, but their reports did not take the form of series of consecutive accounts in which they chronologically report the proceedings of their travels.<sup>26</sup>

## ***Grand reporters vs. anonymous correspondents***

In this period, many French reporters traveled to and through the colonies. Esteemed reporters, like Joseph Kessel, Henri Béraud, Louis Roubaud, Titayna, Jean Dorsenne, Pierre Mac Orlan, and Roland Dorgelès wrote reportage series and published edited collections of their journalistic work about their experiences in the colonies.<sup>27</sup> The reportages by Andrée Viollis, pseudonym of Françoise-Caroline Claudius Jacquet de la Verrère (1879-1950), about Indochina and her accounts about the prelude to the Second Sino-Japanese war in the early 1930s offer a highly interesting example. Viollis is one of the few females, who is counted among the most famous French reporters in the inter-war period. She moved around in leftist intellectual and literary circles and was close to politically engaged novelists and artists like André Malraux and Francis Jourdain. Next to her journalistic work she also published several novels, and like the accounts of many *grand reporters* her reportages have been situated on the border of journalism and literature, which granted them - and the genre in general - part of their prestige.<sup>28</sup>

Viollis started her journalistic career in 1899 and in 1917 she became an official front

22 Butlin, *Geographies of Empire*, 577-590, 604-608; Mackenzie, "Introduction," 13-15; Emanuelle Radar, "Ruis in de loftrompet. Reportages als aanzet tot een Frans koloniaal debat in het interbellum," *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies* 28 (2010): 128-133.

23 Radar, "Putain de colonie!," 17-18, 127-133, 214-216, 749; Cooper, "Colonial Humanism," 65-87; Butlin, *Geographies of Empire*, 577-591, 604-608; Mackenzie, "Introduction," 13-14; Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 25-26.

24 Radar, "Ruis in de loftrompet," 133-137; cf. Martin, "Le voyage du grand reporter," 124-125.

25 Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporters*, 122-131; Martin, "Le voyage du grand reporter," 118-124.

26 Cf. The Office of *The Times*, *The History of The Times*, 858-876.

27 Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 104-120; Radar, "Ruis in de loftrompet," 127-128.

28 Cooper, "Colonial Humanism," 189-190; Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 23-24; Elizabeth Brunazzi, "Andrée Viollis: A 'Grand Reporter' in the intellectual resistance, 1942-1944," *French Cultural Studies* 22, no.3 (2011): 230-231, 234-235; Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 109-120.

correspondent in the First World War for *Le Petit Parisien*. Viollis grew out to be one of the most important reporters of the paper and in that capacity she traveled across the world for her stories. She depicted Russian society ten years after the revolution, traveled to India where she interviewed Gandhi, reported on the civil war in Afghanistan, all of which earned her a place with the most esteemed *grand reporters* of that period.<sup>29</sup> In 1931 she accompanied the Minister of the Colonies, Paul Reynaud on his trip to Indochina. After the Minister returned to France, Viollis' travels continued to Hong Kong and through China, which was on the verge of war with Japan.<sup>30</sup> Her accounts are a good example of a mix of travel reporting and reporting on the more social and political issues of colonialism, which was typical for such accounts in this period.<sup>31</sup> Many of her reportage series were later on collected or reworked into full length book form, which suggests her esteem as a reporter and the popularity of the genre. The analysis for which I have examined 19 reportages, therefore offers an in-depth insight in the discursive characteristics of the reportage in France in the inter-war years. Such an examination offers a detailed perspective on the central norms with regard to reporting and elucidates how the conception of journalism in France was developing.

The success and prestige of the *grand reportage* in France can partly be ascribed to their exclusive character. Witnessing extraordinary events or traveling to distant provinces of the world was reserved for only a few privileged people. Furthermore, to be able to report so extensively on such journeys was an exception within newspaper journalism. The exclusive status of the genre is supported by the repeated advertisement of these stories and by their prominent position in the paper.<sup>32</sup> Viollis' accounts were often published on the front page in their entirety, or at the very least part of the accounts started out there to attract the attention of the reader. At the bottom of these 'teasers' the reader was referred to another page for the remainder of the account. Furthermore, the articles were often accompanied by a photograph, which was still rather uncommon. The pictures contributed to the attempt of bringing these foreign worlds closer. Moreover, the costly use of pictures signals that the editors saw such accounts as central in the newspaper's appeal to the audience. From that perspective the scarcity of reportages in the paper seems to have reinforced this status as attractive genre. Viollis for instance published not that frequently during the time she spent in Indochina and China as *Le Petit Parisien* published not even one reportage a week, and even with multiple reporters contributing accounts the genre would remain rather scarce. This helps to explain the quantitative results, which showed that the reportage played a minor role within the dailies.

To a somewhat lesser extent this also applies to the Dutch press. Wijffes contends that in the inter-war period the popular elaborate writing style rooted in literary discourse was losing ground to a more concise way of describing newsworthy events.<sup>33</sup> Yet, in fleshing out this argument, he somewhat tones down his claim and shows that this development must not be equated with the shift in British journalism towards detached reporting. Reporting still centered on the level of the experience and the reporter kept relying on an "impressionistic" writing style in the "naturalistic tradition".<sup>34</sup> This relates to the analyses by Van Vree and Hagen, who also conclude that reporters maintained a literary style that was a way of expressing one's individuality as a reporter throughout the inter-war years. Moreover, it fits in with my quantitative analysis in the previous chapter.<sup>35</sup>

The persistence of the elaborate and literary oriented style is also supported by the considerable

<sup>29</sup> Cooper, "Colonial Humanism," 189-190; Brunazzi, "Andrée Viollis," 230-231, 236; Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 22-23.

<sup>30</sup> Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 22-23; Cooper, "Colonial Humanism," 189-190.

<sup>31</sup> Radar, "Ruis in de loftrompet," 135-140; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 224-228; Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 122-131, 166-182.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Martin, *Grand reporters*, 282-284; Radar, "Ruis in de loftrompet," 133-136.

<sup>33</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 167-168.

<sup>34</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 170-173.

<sup>35</sup> Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 42-45; Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland*, 84-85.

number of examples of journalist-novelists, like M.J. Brusse, Frans Netscher, P.A. Daum, Philip Mechanicus, E. du Perron, Louis Couperus, Marcellus Emants, Maurits Wagenvoort, A. den Doolaard, Menno ter Braak, Ed. Hoornik, who published both journalistic and literary work.<sup>36</sup> Within this context the reportages of C.K. Elout (1870-1947) about the Dutch Indies offer an interesting case in point. Based on the limited information that is available, it seems that such journalistic trips to the colonies or to other foreign countries, like Russia or China were rather special and that, like in France, they were generally reserved for the most respected reporters. Besides Elout, editor-in-chief Charles Boissevain, *Nieuw Rotterdamse Courant* reporter M. van Blankenstein, and Maurits Wagenvoort, at that time working as reporter for *Oprecht Haarlems Dagblad*, also wrote about their trips through the Dutch Indies.<sup>37</sup> The small number of Dutch reporters who traveled overseas could in the case of the Dutch Indies also have to do with the establishment of the news agency of the Dutch Indies, Aneta, in 1917, which provided both dailies in the Indies as well as many Dutch dailies with news from the metropole or the colonies respectively.<sup>38</sup>

Elout traveled to the Dutch Indies twice, and at both occasions wrote a series of reportages about his travels through the colony.<sup>39</sup> Averaging one a week, the frequency with which his reportages appeared was higher than that of Viollis. The prominence and esteem of these accounts is indicated by the fact that they were published on the front page of *Algemeen Handelsblad* and that both these series were collected in book form later on. About the second reportage series - which forms the Dutch case in this chapter - the paper wrote:

People will remember the second series of letters, lively narrating what the writer had experienced and observed, full of particular details that explained how his impressions came about, journalistic effort of the right kind.<sup>40</sup>

According to the daily, the accounts are a good example of high quality journalism. Although such a small review can be interpreted as an indirect form of self-advertisement, it also points to Elout's prestige as a journalist. This is in line with the historical assessment of Elout's status as a journalist as he is considered to be one of the most influential journalists of the period between the wars.<sup>41</sup> As historian and editor of the recently republished first interviews of Elout, Coen Brummer, puts it:

Elout's work as a journalist has [...] been of great importance in the first turbulent decades of the twentieth century. During the years Elout was active as a journalist he was an influential figure in politics and in the world of culture, art and debate. [...] Furthermore, he was a pioneer in the professionalization of journalism as an occupation.<sup>42</sup>

Employed by *Algemeen Handelsblad* in 1891 Elout earned his name as a critical and independent journalist by his work as parliamentary reporter. He signed these reports with a small logo that

<sup>36</sup> Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland*, 87-89, 102-103, 213-218, 241-242, 340-347, 357-359.

<sup>37</sup> Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland*, 96-103, 270, 308-310.

<sup>38</sup> Termorshuizen, *Realisten en reactionairen*, 94-104, 132-136; Unfortunately, not much research has been done into the interaction between journalists and newspapers in the Netherlands and the Dutch-Indies.

<sup>39</sup> Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland*, 266-272.

<sup>40</sup> "'De Groote Oost'. Reisbrieven van C.K. Elout," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, July 25, 1930.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland*, 266-272; Coen Brummer, *De eerste interviews. De negentiende-eeuwse vraaggesprekken van een journalistieke pionier* (Amsterdam: Elsevier Boeken, 2013), 13-14; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 48-49, 64; Jérôme Heldring, "ELOUT, Cornelis Karel (1870-1947)," in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* (Den Haag: Huygens ING, 1994), [Consultable at: [www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn4/elout](http://www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn4/elout)].

<sup>42</sup> Brummer, *De eerste interviews*, 13.

portrayed a horseshoe. This symbol quickly became a well-known signature that needed no further explanation, earning him the honorary title of 'Horseshoe correspondent'. Moreover, it signaled his esteem within the journalistic domain. Elout was known for his uncompromising analyses, which showcased his independent thoughts and judgment. It was also the reason why he was often referred to as the 'uncrowned editor in chief'. Next to his parliamentary work Elout was an art, theater and literary critic for *Algemeen Handelsblad*. His keen interest and expertise in these fields seems to have rubbed off on his journalism practice, in which he employs what has been described as a "literary-satirical" way of writing.<sup>43</sup> Apart from his status as a reporter, Elout played an important role in the development of journalism into an institutionalized profession. Partly due to his efforts, the Dutch journalists association (*Nederlandse Journalistenkring*) developed into a serious union-like organization, which guarded the professional interests of the Dutch journalists. Analyzing the textual characteristics of Elout's accounts about the Dutch Indies, 28 reportages, can shed some light on the nature of the journalistic norms and quality standards within the Netherlands in this period.

In Britain the reportage had a different and certainly not such an esteemed position. The concept of the grand reporter was more or less absent in this country. There were esteemed correspondents and reporters, but they did not have the same degree of autonomy as Dutch and French reporters experienced. The production of news was much more a shared effort. Reporters submitted their accounts to the sub-editors and editors, which subjected the articles to a process of standardization as discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>44</sup> Subsequently, the role of the reporter in the creation of an article was less important, and it seemed virtually impossible to leave a personal mark on the article - not in the least because of the enforcement of anonymity within the serious press in Britain which I discussed in the previous chapter. As a result, British reporters had abandoned their literary orientation by then.

Because of this different perception of the reporter's role - which is also reflected in the perspective on journalism education - and its concordantly different status, the *grand reportage* in the French or Dutch sense seems to have hardly existed in British journalism. Consequently, there are hardly any examples of extensive reportage series revolving around a certain trip or event. India for example received plenty of coverage, but an exploration of the three British papers with regard to their coverage of India showed that these dailies did not send out reporters to travel across the colony for a longer period of time with the goal of reporting their experiences and conveying the ins and outs of the trip itself.

This is more telling since the 1930s have been characterized as a decade in which many literary authors, like David Herbert Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, E.M. Forster, Peter Fleming, wrote travel stories, some of which even had a history in journalism.<sup>45</sup> George Orwell, Graham Greene or Evelyn Waugh, worked next to their novelistic careers also within the field of journalism. However, the borders between journalism and literature seem to have been sharper delineated than in the Netherlands and France in this period. These writers were mainly rooted in the literary field, and their work was considered to be at odds with the goals and practice that dominated journalism discourse. Thus, in the inter-war period these examples of literary journalism were marginalized in Britain, whereas in the Netherlands and France they were still at the heart of journalism.

<sup>43</sup> Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland*, 271.

<sup>44</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 147; This difference in tradition between British and continental European journalism can still be discerned in contemporary journalism, cf. Frank Esser, "Editorial Structures and Work Principles in British and German Newsrooms," *European Journal of Communication* 13, no.3 (1999): 375-405.

<sup>45</sup> Sonja Valentin & Sonja Wielow, "Die lange Geschichte der Reiseberichterstattung," in *Reisejournalismus. Eine Einführung*, ed. Hans Kleinsteuber & Tanja Thimm (Wiesbaden: VS, 1997), 36; Christie, "British Literary Travelers," 675-677.

This difference in outlook on reporting and the role of the reporter is nicely illustrated by the manner in which the famous salt marches of Mahatma Gandhi were covered in the British dailies. By then Gandhi had manifested himself as the leader of a peaceful resistance to the British rule. He undertook this protest against the British salt taxation laws in India during March and the beginning of April of 1930. The tropical climate in India made salt an important life necessity, but the production of salt was entirely controlled by the British government, which received large profits from this business. As a protest against this policy Gandhi went on a 24 day march to the sea to symbolically collect salt without paying taxes. The protest march drew worldwide attention to India.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror* only paid marginal attention to these recurring political events, which seems to fit their popular profile. *The Times* did publish several reportages about the event, mainly at the start and the finish of the salt marches, but it was less common to publish extensive reportages or entire series about such an important event.<sup>47</sup> To show the contrast, *Le Petit Parisien* sent Andrée Viollis to India - not even a French colony - to follow Gandhi's progress and write a series of reportages on the protest marches in relation to the colonial rule in India.

Illustration 7.1



The fact that *The Times* did not use names in the bylines made it impossible to center the analysis on the work of one or two specific reporters as it proved to be impossible to identify the reporter behind the accounts. For these reasons I had to abandon the focus on influential reporters in the

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Thomas Weber, "Gandhian Nonviolence and the Salt March," *Social Alternatives* 21, no. 2 (2002): 46-51.

<sup>47</sup> I have looked at several important moments in the colonial history in the three dailies, but only *The Times* occasionally published one or two reportages about such events, but not in the same serial way like in France and the Netherlands.

British case, and choose a more diverse set of reportages connected by topical focus. The selected accounts deal with colonial matters in India, and the neighboring countries Afghanistan and Kashmir (nowadays mainly under Indian rule, but parts of Kashmir are under Pakistani and Chinese rule).<sup>48</sup> Due to the less prominent status of the genre, the material was less profuse and did not devote much attention to travel description. For that reason I have also included several reportages that dealt less with particular British colonies, but related more to the genre of travel journalism in general. These accounts on Mexico and a mountaineering expedition in the Himalaya emphasize the travel depictions. The combination of these travel reportages with the reportages about India, which adds up to 38 reportages, makes for a fruitful comparison with the dual nature of the French and Dutch reportage series, in which both the political issues as well as the descriptions of the travels across the colonies play a role. Focusing on the textual ways in which the British reporters dealt with their impressions of the events they witnessed, shows how the way discursive norms and routines relate to the textual reality within the dailies. Such an analysis elucidates the journalistic conception within inter-war Britain, suggesting a divergent outlook on journalism in comparison to France and the Netherlands.

## Succinct depiction

First hand observation by the reporter remained a key part of the reportages in the 1930s. Yet, the characteristics of the way the observations are presented by the reporters diverge considerably between the different cases. The British reportages are much more focused on concise and generally depersonalized information, by which the descriptions of the events are being disconnected from the experience. The way the reporters depict reality is often restricted to a detached enumeration of the chain of events. This can range from providing the basic bare facts to descriptions in which a bit more detail is included, but they clearly maintain a detached style. The following description of festivities surrounding the arrival of the newly appointed Viceroy of India offers a good example:

Punctually at 7.20 a.m. a burst of cheering from the passengers and crew of the liner came faintly across the water as a naval launch sped away from her starboard side. A salute of 31 guns thundered from the men-of-war, to be echoed from a heavy battery ashore, as Lord Willingdon set foot again on Indian soil. His Excellency was received by the Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Philip Chetwode, Sir Frederick Sykes, the Governor of Bombay, and senior officials of the Governments of India and Bombay. Then came nearly an hour's ceremonial while the new Viceroy received loyal addresses, shook hands with representatives of the different communities and public bodies, and inspected the particularly smart guard of honour mounted by the 1st Battalion, The East Lancashire Regiment.<sup>49</sup>

This way of reporting aims to render a description of an event in a way that tries to efface the awareness of being rooted in a subjective reporting process. In the reportage series on Mexico a similar discursive strategy can be discerned. The accounts are clearly aimed at pointing out the best places to visit for tourists - reinforcing the idea of the growing tourism in this period - and describe certain picturesque details. Nevertheless, in their descriptions the reportages move away from the level of the particular experience. The different parts of Mexico, with their specific customs and

<sup>48</sup> As the nation of Pakistan did not exist yet, India still bordered on Afghanistan.

<sup>49</sup> "Change over India," *The Times*, April 18, 1931.

traditions, are depicted in a generic way, which gives the descriptions a more or less universal and interchangeable character, making them identifiable for anyone who would visit the same spots. The following description shows clearly how the reporter transforms his own experience into a more universal one by talking about 'the' generic traveler and by using many passive constructions to hide the fact that he recounts his own subjective observations.

Thus the traveller [sic] who plans to reach Mexico by the direct sea route need not, in winter at least, expect to be either eaten alive or buried at Vera Cruz, and may reasonably rely on preserving his epidermis unpunctured during his visit. [...] Furthermore, the approach to Mexico City is far more impressive by way of Vera Cruz. The railway advances towards the stately Orizaba across a narrow belt of tropical woodland, and then climbs 6,400 ft. in 64 miles through imposing and attractive scenery rising through a variety of climates with the vegetation characteristic of each to the central plateau. Then, having reached the highest point on the line at Acocotla, 8,320 ft., the train descends into the Valley of Mexico, there to reach the picturesque capital city just 12 hours after leaving Vera Cruz. Although it entails an early start at 6.40 a.m. [...] the traveller [sic] should not fail to make the journey by day, as the ascent to the capital is impressive and unusual.<sup>50</sup>

These specific characteristics link up to the way some scholars have distinguished the genre of the reportage from that of the feature. The definition of the latter comes close to that of the reportage, but is considered to depict the generic characteristics of an experience rather than its particularity. It conveys the typical and recurring characteristics of a certain event or situation.<sup>51</sup> I would rather regard such 'features' as a particular form of the reportage, signaling the growing influence of elements of the objectivity regime pertaining to the subjectivity of the factual description. Such a way of writing entails the disconnection of information from the particular experience it is rooted in. In doing so the reporter attempts to raise the account from the level of the particular and subjective to the universal.<sup>52</sup> Still, this form of objectifying reporting did not entail all the typical characteristics of journalistic objectivity. As I will show below, neutrality or impartiality for instance seem to have been enforced less strongly, which is in line with previous research into the influence of objectivity in the British press.<sup>53</sup>

In certain reportages by Elout en Viollis such plain, detached, and generic ways of depicting reality can be found as well. Elout for instance uses the same concise enumerative way of description to convey the characteristics of the different ships he journeys with, but these relatively short parts are only side notes to the more important main story the reporters are telling.

Such a "paddle-steamer" is a flat-bottomed vessel - the "Negara" is one of not even 74 tons net - which is propelled by one large wheel on the backside of the ship (the backside of the ship is the "paddle"). It is therefore able to navigate through very shallow narrow waters (the "Negara" has a draft of only a meter), and on top of that it can take two large loading canoes with it on the wide Barito river.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> "Modern Mexico. II. - A country for the tourist," *The Times*, April 3, 1930.

<sup>51</sup> Haller, *Die Reportage*, 70-80.

<sup>52</sup> Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 128-130; Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 90.

<sup>53</sup> Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 483.

<sup>54</sup> C.K. Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 29, 1929.



Such descriptive elements are certainly not typical for these reportages, and Elout and Viollis did not embrace the disconnection between information and experience like the British reporters did. At the heart of Elout's and Viollis' accounts lies the recurrent attempt to convey their experiences and to evoke their impressions of the colonies, which ranges from the image of a blissful paradise to that of a callous and harsh society. To achieve such a vicarious experience they make a different and more elaborate use of the toolbox with narrative techniques that was at their disposal. Contrary to plain facts, their reportages offer a visceral experience of an event that cannot be seen apart from the person that perceived it. Still, the case of Viollis suggests that such a journalism practice was not considered to be opposite to the way objectivity was conceived in the French journalism discourse.

## Interviewing vs. observing

The divergence between the British reportages vis-à-vis the Dutch and French becomes apparent in the way observations, and also quotes and dialogue figure in the respective reportages. In the reportages about the Great War first hand observation was the main form of reporting in all countries. Sources were consulted by the reporters, but such conversations were generally presented as fortuitous encounters that contributed to the depiction of the atmosphere and gave the accounts a lifelike appearance. This still applies to Elout's reportages, which contain relatively little source consultations, direct quotes, or conversations. The couple of quotes that are found contain quite a lot of colloquial language, and are meant to convey the atmosphere, adding to the authenticity of the account, rather than to actively seek out newsworthy information. This is nicely illustrated when Elout gets the opportunity to cover a trial of administrative corruption, in which several witnesses are heard. In spite of the different people that take the floor, his own observations predominate and the few quotes are only used to convey the particular way Elout perceived this situation. He shows this indirectly by his comments on the episode in which the brother of the defendant is being questioned by the court. This witness makes clear that he rather speaks Dutch than Malaysian, but apparently has a typical accent. For that reason Elout turns directly to his readers and adds an advice on the way this passage should be read in order to convey his experience as detailed and authentic as possible.

But the *gelak manis* - the Malaysian expression fits in perfectly with the sly-sweet character of his smile - grins across the face of Willem Kansil and he answers with a velvet voice: "Rather Dutch; I can express myself better". (To enjoy this incredible ballyhoo one should pronounce these words with an Indian accent.)<sup>55</sup>

This way of employing quotes relates to the quantitative results that indicate the reluctance of Dutch dailies to integrate direct quotes in their articles in order to prevent falling prey to sensationalism. It suggests that interviewing as an overt feature in the text, serving the goal of reinforcing the trustworthy status of the information, was not a common characteristic within Dutch journalism.

In the British reportages this was clearly different. Interviewing as a routine served the purpose of gathering and verifying information. The quotes in the reportages therefore signal a shift in focus from supporting the authenticity of an experience to the elicitation of newsworthy information. Gandhi, for instance, is regularly consulted and asked to comment on his protest marches, and on the relations between the domestic administration and the British rulers. Besides a clear judgment

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<sup>55</sup> C.K. Elout, "De les van Sangir. II. De rechtbank op Siaoë," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 22, 1929.

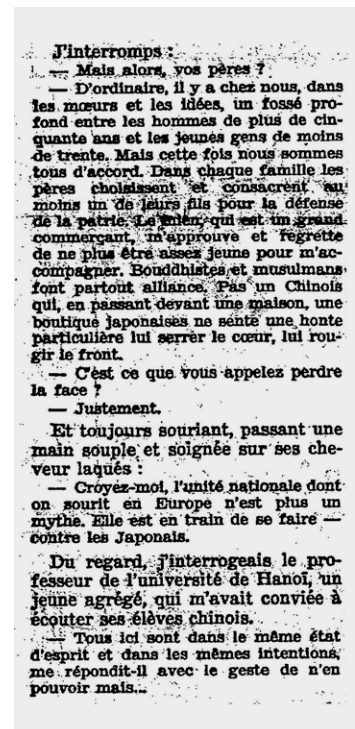
by the reporter, who is obviously not impartial in his analysis, the following example also shows how the journalist is eliciting information instead of employing the quotes mainly to make the experience tangible for the reader.

Mr. Gandhi sat on a divan vigorously spinning cotton for *khaddar* while two volunteers fanned him. He was his usual bland self and as ready as ever to be convinced by his own complicated arguments. He told me that his march was the very embodiment of non-violence and an example to the whole country. As for Calcutta [where on Tuesday six people were killed and about 60 injured in rioting], he disclaimed responsibility for the fact that the unfortunate carters adopted tactics in close imitation of *Satyagraha* [passive resistance] methods, even taking Mr. Gandhi's name as their battlecry. "I do not claim to control all classes in India," he said. "Perhaps they mistook the meaning of my message." The success of the march was proof that non-violence was the best course, said Mr. Gandhi, who added, significantly, that it was not unlikely that India would see more violence very soon.<sup>56</sup>

Viollis holds somewhat of an intermediate position in this respect. She clearly shows that she consults people to gather information and in her accounts she interviews more frequently than her British counterparts. The role interviewing played in the gathering of the presented information is emphasized by the Question & Answer structure of the interview that she often employs. An interview with one of the Chinese students, who condemns Japan's hostile attitude toward China, illustrates nicely how the use of hyphens indicating the start of each question and each answer (see the image right of this paragraph<sup>57</sup>) highlights this form visually. Yet, this is not the only role the interview elements play within her accounts. In addition to conveying newsworthy information about the topic she is dealing with, Viollis depicts the interviews as conversations, in which she paints the concrete situation and circumstances under which it took place as well. This enables her to convey the atmosphere and the experience of the situation. For instance, in the same interview she starts off with a description of the student in question and conveys his tone of voice and facial expressions while he speaks.

As a student at the school of commerce, he doesn't wear, like his Annamite comrades, his national costume, but an elegant vest with a slip case and a matching tie of the best taste. Tall and slender with traits of an almost feminine finesse, made lighter by a timid smile, he spoke in a very soft voice, vibrating with a hidden passion[.]<sup>58</sup>

### Illustration 7.2



<sup>56</sup> "Mr. Gandhi's March," *The Times*, April 3, 1930.

<sup>57</sup> Andrée Viollis, "Les poulx accéléré de la Chine," *Le Petit Parisien*, December 24, 1931.

<sup>58</sup> Viollis, "Les poulx accéléré de la Chine."

The twofold purpose of the interview could explain why in Viollis' reportages the interview parts are generally more extensive than in the British accounts. Whereas the British reporters mostly use concise quotes that only contain the relevant information the reader needs, the lengthier quotes in the French reportages aim to both inform the reader and provide a vicarious experience. This matches the particular development of the interview in France. Within the French context this genre is focused more on story-like expression of the underlying communicative situation in which journalist and interviewee converse. Subsequently, much attention is devoted to the perception of the reporter while interviewing.<sup>59</sup>

## Alternating observation and contextualization

Whereas the reportages about the First World War consisted mainly of direct observations, the genre also adopted certain analytic characteristics in the inter-war period. The reportages alternate between first hand observation or interviews and elaborate episodes in which such information is thoroughly analyzed. The reporters make clear how their observations should be interpreted within the framework of the broader societal context. This links up to Kött's historical analysis of the reportage in which he shows how the genre moved from an eyewitness account to a more complex textual form. Such reportages supplement and triangulate observation on the subjective level of the experience with background information and analysis.<sup>60</sup> Such a development in the inter-war period indicates that the subjective process of eyewitness reporting in itself was no longer enough to constitute a trustworthy account.

Viollis for instance pays considerable attention to the background of Reynaud's visit to the colony and spends quite some time analyzing his political ideas. However, she always makes such passages subsidiary to the observations during the journey. They form no more than an intermezzo in the encompassing observational framework. Similarly, Elout devotes quite some space on the analysis of the (social-)economic, cultural characteristics of the Dutch Indies, and elaborates on the relation between colonizers and the colonized. He interweaves these analyses through his accounts, alternating observation, background information and analysis. Every now and then he devoted an entire article to analyze a certain issue. However, in such cases he preserves the most basic reportage feature by regularly reminding the reader of his actual presence in the colony. Take for instance Elout's analysis of the penal sanctions (*poenale sancties*), which the Dutch government used to force the indigenous population to work for them.<sup>61</sup> His analysis is flanked by short observations signaling his presence in the Indies. While he introduces his subject of analysis, Elout sets the atmosphere by portraying the circumstances that hinder his writing.

With the "Dongala", a mail ship of 300 tons, we have dropped anchor near the global fishing port Bagan Si-Api-Api and we will take a look ashore. [...] [H]owever, first I still needed to discuss what is drawing the attention of the League of Nations nowadays: the working conditions on Sumatra's East Coast and the matter of the "penal sanction". The environment here on this little deck (a "salon" is non-existent, not even a cabin, but what purpose would they have in the heat?) is only

<sup>59</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 73-81; Kött, *Das Interview*, 71-72.

<sup>60</sup> Kött, *Das Interview*, 129-130.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. E.M. Beekman, *Paradijzen van weleer. Koloniale literatuur uit Nederlands-Indië, 1600-1950* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1998), 23-24; For a more elaborate discussion of the colonial system in this respect, cf. Jan Breman, *Koelies, planters en koloniale politiek: het arbeidsregime op de grootlandbouwondernemingen aan Sumatra's Oostkust in het begin van de twintigste eeuw* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 1992).

moderately equipped for writing: the winch of the front shutter thrums, the boat coolies cackle and shout and, worst of all, somewhere on the ship somebody is intensely singing: "Sonia, Sonia, why you not smile?" But it is nice and fresh here and since a few days the cargo hold has already made me accustomed to the shrimp paste sent of Bagan Si Api. So let's go!<sup>62</sup>

He subsequently delves into his analysis of the penal sanctions, but occasionally integrates a sentence or two in which he returns to his concrete writing situation: "Sonia, Soniaaaa! Why you not smile?" Yes Sonia, I wish you would just do it; that might mean the singing would stop. Back to the P.S.! [Penal Sanctions, FH]<sup>63</sup> So, even when his analysis takes up the whole article, Elout keeps on stressing that it is in essence still part of his reportage series.

In the case of Elout the particular way he structures this account makes it reminiscent of an epistolary tradition, in which such switches from direct observation in the present to conveying background information, reflecting on previous events or analyzing this observation, are common.<sup>64</sup> This intertextual link is reinforced by the fact that the later published collection of accounts explicitly called the pieces 'travel letters' in the subtitle. As I have already mentioned, the tradition of writing travel letters was both at the basis of foreign reporting and the literary tradition of epistolary novels.<sup>65</sup> The latter had its peak in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and within travel writing epistolarity typically manifested itself in the accounts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nonetheless, the fact that Elout's accounts have similar characteristics indicates that this tradition was not yet forgotten. Moreover, it also points to a persisting fuzziness of the discursive boundaries between journalism and literature.<sup>66</sup>

In case of the British accounts the analytic parts are more prominent and no longer have a subservient role with regard to the direct observation; it is rather the other way around. The observations provide a concrete illustration of the analysis. Take for example the final stage of Gandhi's salt march when the Indian leader had already illegally collected a portion of salt. The article starts off as a reportage typically does:

At daybreak to-day Mahatma Gandhi left Dandi by motor-car for Bhimrad, a small village near Surat, 20 odd miles to the north. Even holy men are not immune from tire trouble, and punctures near a large patch of cactus near Jalapur made Mr. Gandhi two hours late at Surat. [...] Only a short halt was made at Surat, Mr. Gandhi going straight to Bhimrad, where he was greeted with the usual fervor and a chorus of peasants singing militant songs.<sup>67</sup>

However, after two paragraphs, in which the stage is set, the analysis starts. Here, the observational parts act as illustrations to the argument.

Like most phenomena in Indian politics, Mr. Gandhi's latest move may be interpreted from two widely different points of view. In the first place, it is undoubtedly a confession of failure so far as his original scheme is concerned. The farce staged on Dandi Beach fell flat, and therefore another

62 C.K. Elout, "Werken in Deli," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, March 27, 1929.

63 Elout, "Werken in Deli."

64 Katrina Quinn, "Exploring an early version of literary journalism: Nineteenth-century Epistolary Journalism," *Literary Journalism Studies* 3, no.1 (2011): 37-38.

65 Janet Altman, *Epistolarity. Approaches to a form* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), 122-124; Rebecca Earle, "Introduction: letters, writers and the historian," in *Epistolary Selves. Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945*, ed. Rebecca Earle (Aldershot/Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing, 1999), 4.

66 Quinn, "Nineteenth-century Epistolary Journalism," 34-37.

67 "Mr. Gandhi on tour," *The Times*, April 10, 1930.

and more melodramatic show was put on at the village of Aat. The performance at Aat drew a large audience, but like most modern melodramas, demanded the presence of police in the cast; and when the police failed to answer their cue the show fell flatter than ever. Therefore, like the astute theatrical manager that he is, Mr. Gandhi has abandoned the theatre where his productions have been unsuccessful and has gone on tour in the "small towns" instead.<sup>68</sup>

In the alternation of observation and background information the former has a more modest role than in the French and Dutch accounts, and only conveys the necessary facts. This is a further indication that by focusing more on concise and detached factual information, the British press was diverging from the French and Dutch press.

Apart from the different role analysis plays, the analytic parts suggest that, especially in the Netherlands and Britain, reporters did not refrain from giving explicit value judgments of certain persons or societal elements within the colonial context. Although Viollis also shows where her sympathies lay, her accounts hardly contain explicit judgment. Such an explicitly opinionated perspective has to be distinguished from the exoticist and orientalist descriptions and imagery that permeates all the accounts and clearly influences the picture that is painted of the colonies. Such an outlook on the colonies and their indigenous population is typical for that period and can therefore not be equated with the overt value judgments that some of these accounts also contain.<sup>69</sup>

It seems that within British and Dutch journalism practice within the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a certain degree of opinionated reporting was accepted. Within the British context, which was adopting certain characteristics of the objectivity regime, opinionated reporting was not considered to be at odds with the conception of independent and detached reporting.<sup>70</sup> This becomes clear in the quote above about Gandhi protest. The sarcastic portrayal of Gandhi as putting on an unsuccessful melodramatic performance conveys a derisive image of the Indian leader, which - in the quote above - is made explicit by calling it "undoubtedly a confession of failure".

Elout is less acute in his judgments than the British reporters, but still provides an overall opinionated perspective on colonialism and the Dutch Indies. He is a good representative of the ethical politics of the Netherlands, for he shows much more pity with the living and working environment of the indigenous population. Still he is clearly dedicated to the belief that the Dutch-Indies have mostly benefited from the Dutch rule.<sup>71</sup> In his analysis of the system of the penal sanctions to enforce the work ethic of the indigenous population he clearly voices his beliefs.

The previous will have established, for everyone that isn't deliberately misjudge the situation, that "abolishing" the P.S. in the foreseeable future is out of the question if one doesn't want to destroy the European cultivation on the East Coast entirely. I said "foreseeable" but "unmeasurable" might be more correct, because even if the indigenous population would have become numerous enough, like on Java, to provide the necessary workforce, than they still need to change their nature to actually do it. Neither the Bataks nor the Coastmalayans have the desire for regularities, steady wage labor; they rather slack at a subsistence minimum that they can acquire with only a little labor.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> "Mr. Gandhi on tour," *The Times*.

<sup>69</sup> Cooper, "Colonial Humanism," 190-194; Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 29-30; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 221-224.

<sup>70</sup> Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 482-485.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Hagen, *Journalisten in Nederland*, 270-271.

<sup>72</sup> Elout, "Werken in Deli."

Viollis generally withholds her explicit judgment and restricts herself to the description of reality.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, at certain moments her opinion shines through her descriptions, making clear how she feels about the situation.<sup>74</sup> A good example of this can be found in one of Viollis' reportages when she traveled through Annam (Vietnam nowadays) and encountered a coal mining operation. Viollis describes this coal mine as an infernal place. After this compelling image, she analyzes the social-economic situation of the miners and implicitly takes pity on the exploited laborers.

Now, you want to compare numbers? This society had and still has an unprecedented property. [...] The working day lasts, in principal, ten hours, but in reality teams of workers, guided by supervisors, having to provide certain amounts of coals, labor until their task is fulfilled; [...] thus, hardly any housing for the natives: barren huts are rented to the crimping supervisors, which they sublet with profit to the workers. The manager showed us an entirely new and very well organized hospital; it was time, indeed, that somebody occupied himself somewhat with the health and hygiene of this work force, whose injuries remained untreated up until now.[...] [H]is employees put forward that the working conditions were sufficient for a region where a farmer hardly makes 1,50 Francs a day.<sup>75</sup>

An interesting fact is that Viollis voiced a much more explicit critique on the circumstances in the colonies when she rewrote the reportages to compile them in book form. This suggests that impartiality was enforced in newspaper journalism. This is supported by Viollis' reflection on the discussion she had with the editor of *Le Petit Parisien*, Elie Bois, before she joined Reynaud on his trip. In response to Viollis' protest to a trip in which she was part of an official political delegation, which she feared would compromise the independence of her account, Bois pointed out that this was not an issue in his eyes: "We're not asking for your opinion or any opinions, but objective and if possible picturesque reports."<sup>76</sup> This quote sheds light on the way objectivity was conceived in France and is a perfect illustration of the fuzziness of the notion of in the journalistic debate. In this case objectivity and colorful - and therefore inherently subjective - descriptions apparently were not considered to be at odds with each other. This supports Ruellan's argument that when the notion was used in France was not defined very clearly and mostly served a strategic purpose in claiming a professional status for journalism.<sup>77</sup>

As we will see below, this 'picturesque' reporting forms an important part of both Viollis' and Elout's reportages. This reinforces my contention that in Britain the focus on factual reporting first and foremost came to signify the disconnection between information and experience. Conversely in France the subjective experience played a pivotal role in the accounts, and when objectivity was mentioned it referred to the importance of independence and to the strive for impartiality. As Viollis wrote about her reporting:

I certainly do not have the illusion that I have seen or understood everything. [...] But I am aware to have stayed, if not within bounds of the truth - who can boast to see that from only on viewpoint? - then at least devoted to impartiality.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Cooper, "Colonial Humanism," 190-194; Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 25.

<sup>74</sup> Interesting within this context is that Viollis was much more critical of French colonialism when she rewrote the reportages for a compilation in book form, cf. Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 25.

<sup>75</sup> Andrée Viollis, "Visions rapides d'un Tonkin éblouissant et fantomatique," *Le Petit Parisien*, November 17, 1931.

<sup>76</sup> Elie Bois cited in: Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 179; cf. Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 24.

<sup>77</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 123-124.

<sup>78</sup> Andrée Viollis cited in: Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 179-180.

This quote echoes a conception of objectivity that was voiced in literary naturalism. In this literary movement objectivity meant having an independent, unbiased and impartial outlook on the world. This could be represented truthfully by conveying one's observations and perceptions. The naturalists acknowledged the inherent subjectivity of this process and Zola, arguably the most influential French naturalist, called a naturalistic work of art "a corner of nature seen through a temperament".<sup>79</sup> This statement suggests that Zola accepted the fact that the world is always seen from a certain subjective perspective. This is reinforced by Zola's statements on the way literary writers should convey the world. Although he propagated a clear writing style this did not mean a detached depiction of reality though. In general, Zola did not assign much value to style.

And by naturalism, I say again, is meant the experimental method, the introduction of observation and experiment into literature. Rhetoric, for the moment, has no place here. Let us first fix upon the method, on which there should be agreement, and after that accept all the different styles in letters which may be produced, looking upon them as the expressions of the literary temperament of the writers.<sup>80</sup>

On the other hand the quote above also shows he certainly did not reject a picturesque style and many scholars have shown how he often made use of such a style himself.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, a few naturalists did give priority to a refined and highly personal style. Especially, the Goncourt brothers, who were particularly influential in the Netherlands, were known for their *écriture artiste*, which can thus also be considered a characteristic of naturalistic literature - be it not the most common one.<sup>82</sup>

The divergent outlook on journalism practice can thus be seen as an indication of the difference in the way these countries dealt with the subjectivity of the reporter. In Britain the subjectivity of the reporter was effaced by filtering out the presence of the reporter and the related colored descriptions of reality, but explicit judgments about these facts were permissible. In turn, the French reporters considered the subjective elements of the description of reality to be an inevitable and therefore less problematic characteristic of factual reporting. They tried to contain the subjectivity of the reporter rather by refraining from overt judgment.

The position of Dutch journalists in this respect can be described as intermediate. A short inquiry into the explicit use of objectivity as a norm within the Dutch papers indicates that the term mainly referred to impartiality, like in France.<sup>83</sup> Yet, it seems that the notion was mainly used strategically in the debate about the lack of journalistic standards of certain papers. As Van Vree has suggested, independent judgment remained an important characteristic in the Dutch press, which was given more importance than "uninspiring neutrality".<sup>84</sup> Yet, contrary to the detached way of reporting of the British press, Dutch reporters fused these elements to a form of factual reporting that was inspired by the French naturalistic way of writing.<sup>85</sup> Elout even shows a stronger orientation on the stylistic tradition of literary naturalism than Viollis.

<sup>79</sup> Brian Nelson, "Zola and the nineteenth century," in *The Cambridge Companion to Zola*, ed. Brian Nelson (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), 4.

<sup>80</sup> Emile Zola, *The experimental novel and other essays* (New York: Haskell House, 1964), 48  
[Consultable at: [http://english.duke.edu/uploads/assets/Zola\\_%20%20Experimental%20Novel.pdf](http://english.duke.edu/uploads/assets/Zola_%20%20Experimental%20Novel.pdf)].

<sup>81</sup> Nelson, "Zola and the nineteenth century," 3-7.

<sup>82</sup> Mary Kemperink, *Van observatie tot extase. Sensitivistisch proza rond 1900* (Utrecht/Antwerpen: Veen, 1988), 218-219; Katherine Ashley, *Edmond de Goncourt and the Novel: Naturalism and Decadence* (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2005), 20-29.

<sup>83</sup> This inquiry consisted of a student-assistent searching the digital database of historical newspaper in this period with a keyword search for objectivity.

<sup>84</sup> Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 36-45.

<sup>85</sup> Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*, 36-45; Wijffes, "Modernization of Style," 72-73, 79.

## The colonial experience - bringing foreign worlds closer

The underlying aim of the French and Dutch colonial travel reportages was to show a world that had remained foreign to a lot of the people reading the newspaper. In Britain the reportage about India clearly differed in this respect, but the accounts about Mexico and the Himalaya shared this goal. Of course many people had a superficial knowledge of the colonies. They might have gotten an impression through films or fictional travel literature, but only a small percentage had actually visited these parts of the world, let alone traveled through the less familiar areas. The reporters thus brought the foreign home, and needed to present these realms in a way that their readership could get a glimpse of the culture, traditions and conditions of life over there. A central theme in this attempt was the clash between cultures when European colonizers or travelers met the original inhabitants of the new large colonial empires. Especially the French and Dutch reportages in my corpus convey the colonies in a way that fits in with an encompassing framework of travel literature that is strongly influenced by (social) Darwinism, exoticism, orientalism and primitivism. In this body of literature the colony and the indigenous population is portrayed in - from our current perspective generally condescending - stereotypes as Europe's negative.<sup>86</sup> By presenting their own experiences the reporters could give a vivid impression of this foreign world and acquaint their readership to it.

With much detail they conveyed the culture clash they experienced, in which they often used popular Eurocentric oppositions, like western civilization vs. indigenous primitivism, maturity vs. puerility, rational sensibility vs. naivety.<sup>87</sup> In most cases these depictions expressed the Western superiority, but at some occasions they also presented colonial society in terms of purity, untainted innocence, suggesting that their own society had lost these characteristics during their ascent on the ladder of civilization.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, in their effort to make their experiences comprehensible for their readership, their accounts contain comparisons in which the colonies are described in terms of familiar experiences or landmarks of their respective home country.<sup>89</sup>

### First person perspective

Although in some cases the reportages still employ a first person perspective, in Britain the reporter is, in general, retreating from the text in the inter-war years. He or she rather attempts to mask this intermediary role by effacing the textual presence of the reporter. In combination with the concise narrative style the accounts come across as detached, depersonalized and objectified, offering a large contrast with the French and Dutch reportages. Viollis and Elout continuously make clear that the observations are tied to the subject of the reporter, whose presence is implicitly depicted as the necessary hinge between reality and the public. It is thus obvious that the reader only has access to reality through the reporter's eyes, and the truth claim of the texts is partially based on this presence.<sup>90</sup> When, for example, Viollis enters the modern and europeanized city of Hanoi, she reminisces about the more traditional Annamese city of Hué and it is clear that the imagery she uses refers to her subjective impression.

<sup>86</sup> Christie, "British Literary Travelers," 675-677; Cooper, *France in Indochina*, 117-130; Sèbe, "Exalting Imperial Grandeur," 38-42; McKenzie, "Passion or Indifference," 75-76; Spurr, *Rhetoric of Empire*, 4-8.

<sup>87</sup> Mary Kemperink, *Het verloren paradijs. De literatuur en cultuur van het Nederlandse fin de siècle* (Amsterdam: AUP, 2001), 79-81; Spurr, *Rhetoric of Empire*, 46-47.

<sup>88</sup> McKenzie, "Passion or Indifference," 75-76; Spurr, *Rhetoric of Empire*, 125-126; Kemperink, *Verloren paradijs*, 79-80.

<sup>89</sup> Spurr, *Rhetoric of Empire*, 28-32, 110-115.

<sup>90</sup> My analysis therefore refutes Healey's claim that Viollis effaces her presence in the texts and takes on the role of the proverbial fly on the wall, cf. Healey, "Andrée Viollis in Indochina," 24; Radar, "Ruis in de loftrompet," 135.



While the last ferry passes over the silver river that flows at the foot of the malachite mountain, I see the procession under the large parasols of carved wood, which are carried by unaffected young men dressed in vibrant red, the greybeards in blue robes in front of the door of a small, run-down pagoda, with folded hands and reverential backs uttering words of welcome, while the flute players, with inflated cheeks, sent their shrill nasal sounds spiraling up in the air and dominating the muffled drone of the tom-toms. [...] I remember first and foremost that of the famous emperor Minh Mang, who lived a century ago.<sup>91</sup>

Although both Viollis and Elout make frequent and apparent use of the first person perspective, there are noticeable differences between both set of reportages. Viollis in no way hides the fact that her accounts are the result of her own subjective experiences, and she occasionally even puts herself into the limelight. Yet in general, she remains a first person minor, who observes the events, but does not play a main part in the story. This is exactly where the accounts of Elout differ. Most of his accounts revolve around the events in which he is the central actor. The following excerpt points to this personal approach of his reportage series and the pivotal role he plays in his accounts.

There I am again in the velvet of the Indies. Of the Indies' warmth, which penetrates so nicely into the marrow of someone, who just came from the long tunnel of the Dutch winter cold and low skies. And of the Indies' flexibility, which adds more smile to the live here than over there. The Indies has enveloped me again with all its velvet temptations... and also with the brilliant greatness of its time. I know that I will feel it even stronger, because here on "the East Coast" the velvet of the East is enveloped by a beautiful and clean but European harness.<sup>92</sup>

Of course, Elout's reportage satisfies the journalistic purpose of rendering newsworthy information to his readership, but he fulfills this task by fully concentrating on his own experiences and emotions in response to the colonial world. He illustrates the image of the Indies constantly with anecdotal evidence derived from his own experiences.

Who is traveling through the Indies with the in my view unsurpassed K.P.M. [Royal Parcel shipment Company, FH] has to be prepared for strange disembarkation. [...] I thus had to organize myself, that is to say in a small native double boat, that I was paddled to the Holey Fiscal Tree [a nickname for Customs, FH], which I, as I can, but my *barang* [luggage, FH] can't, only dared when most of the hustle had subsided and I could get hold of a canoe just for me and my suitcases.<sup>93</sup>

Elout should therefore be viewed as a first person major. His approach to reporting has a stronger personal touch than that of Viollis, making the subjectivity of his accounts more obvious.

### ***Subjective interpretation***

An interesting aspect of this subjectivity is the uninhibited interpretations of the facial expressions that are present in the accounts of Elout and Viollis, although less far-reaching in the accounts of the latter. Both reporters often encounter people who they literally judge on the way these individual look out into the world. Viollis for instance emphasizes the intelligence that the eyes of prime minister

<sup>91</sup> Andrée Viollis, "M. Reynaud est a Hanoï capitale du Tonkin," *Le Petit Parisien*, November 9, 1931.

<sup>92</sup> C.K. Elout, "Vreugden van Deli," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, March 10, 1929.

<sup>93</sup> C.K. Elout, "De Rots van Nederland," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 26, 1929.

of Cambodia exude: "His Excellence Thioun is a little man with an amiable face and eyes that shine with intelligence from underneath a pair of golden glasses."<sup>94</sup> Elout takes his interpretation a step further, when he describes his encounter with one of the original inhabitants of Borneo, famous for their headhunting rituals. In the following quote Elout interprets without any inhibition the facial expression of a native as if he can read his mind; the perspective almost tilts over to that of the "savage".

What made the appearance of this man, in the badly lit gallery, even more into that of a guileless "wild" was the expression of childlike witlessness, which spoke from his open eyes, his open mouth and his entire blank childlike face. [...] He slowly made a couple steps in the open field and stayed there, his right hand, in which he still held the incomprehensible djimat [talisman, FH] of the white man, extended a little. I waved, but that was another thing he didn't understand and I saw him standing like this for a long time in front of that tragic house. Symbol of the decay of the people, with his asking hand and quizzical, blank face, looking out over the wide water to the strange white man's ship.<sup>95</sup>

The description above shows the similarities to naturalist literature, in which such a form of portrayal of people was ubiquitous.<sup>96</sup> Within journalism they also have a long tradition in the genre of the political portrait or parliamentary reportage, which Elout had quite some experience with as a parliamentary reporter.<sup>97</sup> The common appearance of such far-reaching interpretations in general suggests that these descriptions were seen as authentic.

### ***A sense of immediacy and proximity***

The first person perspective also facilitates a different technique, which enables the author to put the reader in his or her shoes. Instead of telling the story with hindsight, the narration coincides with the experience. Subsequently, the story gradually unfolds rather than making clear from the start what the outcome will be. To increase the proximity of the reader to the event even more, such descriptions often start out with a switch from past to present tense. Like with the reportages about the First World War, the reader is pulled into the story, which makes the accounts much more compelling, and engages the reader with reality. Viollis uses this way of narrating to build suspense:

Only one building sparkled through its hundreds of windows: the military base of the Japanese soldiers.

"Much trouble!"

11 P.M.: I am not sleeping. An agitated mind, restless, I occasionally walk to my window. It seems impossible that nothing will happen tonight. Suddenly, I leap to my feet: bangs resound. Couldn't it be fire-crackers, which the Chinese love to set off for the fun of hearing the noise? But no, it really is the rattling of machine guns. I dress myself hastily and run to a garage nearby where the chauffeurs know me well. One of them understands immediately where he has to take me.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Andrée Viollis, "Quatre jours d'enchantement," *Le Petit Parisien*, October 28, 1931.

<sup>95</sup> C.K. Elout, "In Dajakland," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 6, 1929.

<sup>96</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 109-115; Kemperink, "Wat wil het naturalisme?," 56.

<sup>97</sup> Wijffes, "Modernization in Style," 75-79.

<sup>98</sup> Andrée Viollis, "L'occupation japonaise a Changhai vue par notre envoyée special," *Le Petit Parisien*, January 30, 1932.

As a result she renders an exciting account, which is reinforced by her staccato writing style. *En passant*, Viollis implicitly emphasizes her well-developed news instinct, for in this excerpt it seems like she felt that something newsworthy was about to happen.

Simultaneously, it is a way for the reporter to vicariously convey and share the impact the situation or event had on him, attempting to incite similar emotions with the reader. Rather than to build up actual tension, Elout uses this technique to convey the ambience.

I have turned my gaze away from the “Barentsz” and have sunk back in my linen deck chair and immersed myself in the motionless live without cares and without desires. [...] It is evening now. The sea breeze has subsided and the mountain breeze that comes gliding down from the volcano at night is still sleeping its daytime-stealing sleep. It is getting milder. And more quiet. And darker. The parrots float dimly from the palm trees over to the few trees in front of the *baroega* [little hut made of bamboo, FH] and after some quibbling about the best spot, put their head under their wings. The night is now enveloping everything in its warm, black arms.<sup>99</sup>

The reporters emphasize the immediacy of the event and convey the events as if one is looking through the eyes of the reporter. This increases the reader’s feeling of proximity, gaining the description a greater evocative power.

This well-known narrative technique of letting the moment of narration and experience coincide is also found a few times in the British reportages, but such occasions are not employed the same way as in the French and Dutch examples above. The British reporters do occasionally enter their stories to concisely set the scene by conveying some atmospheric elements. Yet, these instances are not exploited to convey a certain state of mind or to create suspense like Elout and Viollis did. On one occasion the use of this technique is particularly telling, and indicates that the British reporters rather aim for detached and concise facts rather than conveying an experience. In the following quote the reporter interrupts the analysis of the conflict on the Indian and Afghanistan border between the Afridi tribe and the British forces to convey a quick glance of the circumstances under which he or she is writing.

As I write this dispatch the sound of heavy gunfire is echoing down my broad veranda, and, in the circumstances, it is rather difficult to settle to a dispassionate survey of the state of affairs. Even now, however, several facts stand out clearly.<sup>100</sup>

The depiction of these warlike circumstances does not form a prelude to a compellingly portrayed series of observations, but rather emphasizes the effort of the reporter to maintain a detached stance. By picking up the thread of the analysis after this short intermezzo, the reporter suggests that he or she managed to do so in spite of the circumstances, thereby highlighting his or her professional attitude. Thus whereas Elout and Viollis employ this way of narrating to make their reportages more authentic and compelling, in the British example the technique is used to point out the importance of being able to separate the information from that experiential level. A similar difference in journalistic aims can be seen in the stylistic devices that are used to evoke the atmosphere of these foreign realms and the way the reporters experience them.

<sup>99</sup> C.K. Elout, “Ternataansche idylle,” *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 30, 1929.

<sup>100</sup> “Fight near Peshawar,” *The Times*, June 6, 1930.

### ***Evoking a tropical paradise: imagery***

Traveling through the colonial empire came with a plenitude of new impressions. The senses were continuously stimulated by new scents, unknown sounds, overwhelming visual views of tropical scenery, and could lead to a different state of mind, which was also partially a result of the heat and the long travel distances. The reporters convey their impressions and experiences to the reader. First of all, they give detailed descriptions of the people and the environment that play a role in the newsworthy events. Take for example Violis' attempts to portray Paul Reynaud, the Minister of the Colonies, and his wife.

A man of small posture with a straight back and the rugged shoulders of sportsman, he paces up and down the deck with a quick and determined stride, his arm linked with that of his daughter, a beautiful and fresh high school graduate who looks into the world with an open and sensible mind. Or he is seated close to Madam Reynaud, daughter of the president of the Bar Henri-Robert, who has won the sympathy of the crew with her frugality and amiable charm.<sup>101</sup>

Such depictions give readers a good impression of what the reporters have seen. Still, readers are kept at bay, because such descriptions are not evocative and do not bring this foreign world to life. For that to happen, the characteristics of the exterior environment need to be fused to the interior subjective perception of the reporter, thereby conveying reality on the level of the experience. Especially in the British accounts the reporters delimit the observational parts to such detailed, but detached observations. Take for instance the description of Gandhi as he was illegally obtaining salt from the sea.

Mahatma Gandhi broke the salt laws of the Indian Government at 6.30 this morning. About a quarter of an hour earlier he had walked down the steps of his bungalow and been greeted almost rapturously by some 4,000 followers who had gathered during the night, spending the hour before dawn in silent prayer alternated by Nationalist songs. Mr. Gandhi, wearing a loin-cloth, plunged into the sea, which is almost lukewarm here, and enjoyed a swim. After a few minutes, he came out and, accompanied by his lieutenants, walked along the firm sand at the water's edge. Punctually at the half-hour [...] his companions advised him of the fact. Mr. Gandhi stooped down, scooped up a handful of sand and salt water, and returned to the bungalow with a broad smile on his face.<sup>102</sup>

Only occasionally certain passages use descriptive techniques with a more evocative character, in which the description is clearly aimed to convey a vicarious experience. The best examples of this can be found in the reportages about the mountaineering expedition in the Himalaya with the goal of conquering the Kanchenjunga, one of the highest and most inaccessible mountains of the world. At that time it had only been conquered a few times.

Around us giant peaks sweep into the afternoon mists, their blue glacier tongues seeming to mock the invader in these primitive solitudes. Not one peak has known the foot of man. [...] Straight out of a glacier rose nameless peaks of terrific aspect, with thin, keen edges of glittering ice, fluted and carved by the wind into biscuit-like edges, ridges, and peaks that look hopelessly inaccessible save only to the gods reputed to dwell on their fairylike summits.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Andrée Violis, "À bord du "D'Artagnan"," *Le Petit Parisien*, September 23, 1931.

<sup>102</sup> "Mr. Gandhi," *The Times*, April 7, 1930.

<sup>103</sup> "Kanchenjunga," *The Times*, May 5, 1931.

It is telling that such expressive descriptions appear more often in a series in which the appeal and newsworthiness of the accounts depends for a very large part on the evocation of the stunning scenery. This seems to force the reporter to go beyond the common narrative techniques of journalism and use personification and metaphors to give the reader an impression of the Himalaya. What could also have been a factor in this consideration is the fact that the topic is uncontroversial and not as politically delicate as the colonial issues. This series was typically considered to be 'soft news', which might have enabled a more lenient attitude towards the discursive freedom of the reporter.<sup>104</sup> Nonetheless, such descriptions are much more uncommon in the British reportages than in the French and Dutch, in which imagery is used more plentiful and more elaborate, regardless of the political delicacy of the topic.

The French and Dutch reporters' encounters with this wondrous world resulted in accounts in which they employed all necessary narrative means and stylistic tropes to make it tangible for their readers. Especially the tropical scenery and atmosphere astounded the reporters and they put in great effort to convey their feelings of having landed in a mystical world. Take for instance the moment Viollis laid eyes on the Ha Long Bay in Annam, which was and is renowned for its beauty - nowadays it is part of the UNESCO list of world heritage.

At the exit of this hell [the coal mines, FH] the most marvelous paradise awaited us. We entered it on a gunboat, the *Viguante*, on which everything and everyone, cabins, officers, sailors, had a white angel-like smile. [...] On an immense sea tapestry, with all shades of gold and green, like a rug of 400 kilometers long: imagine yourself nonetheless thousands of islands and islets, overgrown boulders and rocks; bushes and lianas are growing there in the most surprising shapes. At nightfall, dark profiles against a colorful sky, I thought I saw a monstrous and strangely assorted herd of animals: lions, bulls, lizards, giant tortoises, which had solidified in unbelievable positions and looked like they were magically frolicking around with each other.<sup>105</sup>

By the use of imagery like metaphors and comparisons Viollis conveyed the staggering beauty of the bay and the impression it made on her.

In their attempt to create a vicarious experience of the natural beauty and atmosphere of the colony for the readers Viollis and Elout use particular imagery that refers to the imaginary dreamlike worlds of fairytales, fantasy stories and ancient myths.<sup>106</sup> The following quote from Elout's account of his boat trip on the Barito River is also engrossed in such paradisiacal imagery:

And the setting of the sun was a magnificent celebration. We were right between two bends on an expansion of the Barito, some sort of small lake and right ahead the sun hid behind a cloud formation of unusually sharp delineated, stiffly clenched grey-and-white snowiness. Then its reflection hit the water: black with horizontal golden stripes underneath the Forest, in front of it sorcery of vertical courses, indigo and rose-red, with very odd straight, horizontal constrictions at the bottom that it seemed the reflection of a gigantic fairy tale-castle. Somewhat later this recessed castle turned into an entire city of snowy blue with on the bottom, several golden spires. At that point [...] the sun blended everything in a mesh of colors and conjured up courses of red and black

<sup>104</sup> Folker Hanusch, "The Dimensions of Travel Journalism," *Journalism Studies* 11, no.1 (2010): 70-76.

<sup>105</sup> Viollis, "Visions rapides d'un Tonkin éblouissant et fantomatique."

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Spurr, *Rhetoric of Empire*, 17-21; Christie, "British Literary Travelers," 675-676.

in the water, walled by the dark Forest above and finally, up high, the clutched snow colossus behind which the sun, thus masked, shot away a fire of wide red flames into the troubled sky.<sup>107</sup>

The personification of nature, which can also be seen in the quote above in which the sun becomes anthropomorphized, also contributes a great deal to the magical undertones with which the atmosphere is charged. This is certainly the case in Elout's accounts when he penetrates deeper into the least westernized parts of the colonial empire. The waterfall in Manado on the northern tip of Celebes (nowadays known as Sulawesi) is for instance described as some sort of mythical water beast.

The water jumps forward from a steep forest side and gouges down in a fall of foaming white scales into a cylindrical quiver of primeval forest giving the thunder of the shed a magnificent echo and one can hear this roaring white water beast from afar.<sup>108</sup>

The mysticism and magic of this image is reinforced by Elout's reflection on his experiences, in which colonial society is occasionally awarded a paradisiacal status. In the following quote he explicitly equates the colonial environment, not yet tainted by civilized modernity like European society, with the innocence and harmony of the biblical paradise before the Fall.

For twenty four hours I have lived in Paradise here. Be it without Eve..... but also without the serpent. Yet, before the power and size of nature and the children of men that are at home here, I felt small and helpless as Westerner. But still in the vestibule of earthly bliss.<sup>109</sup>

In the Viollis' reportages such references to paradise are less obvious and less clearly personalized than in Elout's accounts. Still, at times she also employs similar comparisons to point to the vigor and power of the elements in this part of the world.

The night fell on this place. Its magnificent passion could never offer the terrifying and brutal disorder of the African jungle, but knows to accept the discipline imposed by man and stays cheerful like its inhabitants. And with a mysterious softness the last rays of a veiled sun illuminated the dazzling garden, where the general agent of maritime post service, Mr. Pascalis and the French missionaries had kindly gathered around the colonial tables.<sup>110</sup>

Like Elout she explicitly refers to the trope of the colonial paradise. In one of her reportages she draws a comparison between the impression she gets of the colonies and the novel *Paul et Virginie* (1787), written by pre-romantic novelist Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre.

Children, on the schoolyard that resembles a mountain plain in spring: women return from the fields, with lifted arms full of vegetables, illuminated by the sun. There are visions of innocence and joy everywhere, evoking the untainted paradise of Paul and Virginie.<sup>111</sup>

**107** Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."

**108** Elout, "De Rots van Nederland."

**109** Elout, "Ternataansche idylle,"

**110** Andrée Viollis, "M. Paul Reynaud est arrivé à Singapour," *Le Petit Parisien*, October 5, 1931.

**111** Viollis, "M. Paul Reynaud est arrivé à Singapour."

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre was strongly influenced by the philosophical ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau about the nature of man and the bliss of primitivism.<sup>112</sup> This influence is clear in *Paul et Virginie*, which is a story about two children who grew up in a tropical utopian paradise. Their idyllic world is not (yet) desecrated by social and economic inequality or violence.<sup>113</sup> Such intertextual references help to evoke the dream-like features of traveling through the colonies and express Viollis' astonishment and marvel at the tropical scenery and colonial society. These comparisons are among the most positive depictions she uses, and emphasize the innocence of certain places in the colonies where the traditional life has survived, showing some anxiety with the increasing modernity of Western society.<sup>114</sup>

Viollis' and Elout's depictions of the scenery also implicitly point to the similarities between the countries and to the bonds they have with each other. The colonial scenery is in such cases compared to well-known landmarks in their home country. Viollis for instance describes certain mountain scenery surrounding the city of Dalat in Annam by referring to the Vosges and the Pyrenees.

The following day, from sunset, in the midst of a fresh landscape of the Vosges or the Pyrenees, a long ascent of the mountains that are crowned by the city of Dalat at 1.500 meters, the summer residence of Indochina. At the foot of the standards, which map out the road, a group of officials and dignitaries of the villages, dressed in black or blue silk robes, have gathered around the triumphal arches of foliage.<sup>115</sup>

This strategy helps to get the image across to the readers as most of them had never laid eyes on these foreign parts of the world and probably had a hard time imagining how it looked like.

### **Écriture artiste**

In the reportages of Elout, the expressive and evocative power of the descriptions is sometimes strengthened by certain stylistic devices that help to convey the colonial experience. Such techniques are not found in the British and French case, and suggest the great discursive freedom of the Dutch reporters in their attempt to provide a vicarious experience to the reader. During his stay in Banjarmasin, the capital of Borneo (South-Kalimantan nowadays) Elout for instance experiences the heavy rains of the monsoon. To convey and foreground the ceaselessness of the rain, he uses parataxis, the repetitive use of consecutively ordered short sentences that resemble a short telegram style. Moreover, this technique is reinforced by the recurring use of forms of the verb 'to rain' and the noun 'rain':

It is raining. It is raining in Bandjermasin. In the wet period. And it has been raining, yesterday and last night, the entire night. And it will be raining. A lot, a whole lot. And heavy, thundering heavy. [...] And the rain clatters down on everything. The Indian rain. In Bandjermasin.<sup>116</sup>

Another strategy Elout employs to help get across the colonial experience in all the riches of its sounds and images is his use of assonance and alliteration. By these forms of rhyme Elout highlights

<sup>112</sup> Roselyne Rey, "L'animalité dans l'oeuvre de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre: convenance, consonance, et contraste," *Revue de synthèse* 4, no.3-4 (1992): 311-319.

<sup>113</sup> Jean-Michel Racault, "'Paul et Virginie' et l'utopie: de la 'petite société' au mythe collectif," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 242 (1986): 419-471.

<sup>114</sup> Spurr, *Rhetoric of Empire*, 125-130; Kemperink, *Verloren paradijs*, 82-87.

<sup>115</sup> Andrée Viollis, "M. Paul Reynaud poursuivant son enquête visite l'Annam," *Le Petit Parisien*, November 6, 1931.

<sup>116</sup> C.K. Elout, "Welvaart en water," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 17, 1929.

his stylistic attempt to render the sounds of the nature surrounding him, adding to the expressive power of the image he evokes. Furthermore, it is an expression of the interaction between the colonial world and the moods and emotions of the subject of the reporter, which at the same time seem to have elicited the use of these stylistic devices (I have made the characters bold that create the sound repetition).

Krekels snerpen. **Vuurv**liegen komen aange**von**kt op 't lamplicht van den passanggrahan.  
Een **donker bon**kelen van riemen (nu eens geen pagaaien) **mompelt** uit de diepte **op**.  
**Zwaar zwoeg**t de zee.<sup>117</sup>

Such formulations also help summoning up the magical atmosphere of the colonial world by highlighting the imagery that is used. For instance, the alliteration and assonance of “**ruggelings liggende halve maan**” draws the attention to the personification of the moon, because it foregrounds the anthropomorphized description of the position the moon is in.

[D]e licht bouquetten die de tallooze schepen hieven tegen den maan- en sterrennacht, hun **wie**gelende **w**eerschijnhanen in het zwarte **w**ater, de stille, zwarte rompen, het groote, rosegouden sinaasappelpart van de **ruggelings liggende halve maan**, het knarsen van de riemen eener sampan tegen de houten **dollen**, het verre **rollen** van een wins, wat roepen over het **wijde w**ater en, om alles heen, het **wazig-wikkelen** van den **blauwig-bleeken** nacht.<sup>118</sup>

These stylistic devices are highly uncommon in journalism - and prose in general for that matter - and are more often found in poetry, particularly that of the Dutch Eighties Movement, in which naturalism's focus on reality was combined with forms of sensitivist prose. For that reason, in this Dutch form of naturalism, the feelings and emotions of the author played a stronger role than in France.<sup>119</sup> In the Eighties Movement this impressionistic way of writing gained prominence, and the work of these authors shows a heavy use of adjectives, neologisms. Furthermore, they frequently employ alliteration and assonance to almost onomatopoeically convey the subjective perception of reality.<sup>120</sup> Certain writers of the Eighties Movement or those who operated in the margins, like Louis Couperus, Jacobus van Looij, Herman Heijermans, Lodewijk van Deyssel, Johan de Meester and Frans Netscher were known to integrate such forms of *écriture artiste* in prose texts as well through which they aimed to express the way their subjectivity interacted with reality.<sup>121</sup> It is unclear to what extent Elout was acquainted with the writers in this movement, but through his work as art, theater and literary critic he must have been familiar with at least the key characteristics of this literary movement.<sup>122</sup>

Furthermore, Elout had met the Eighties writer Frederik van Eeden in person in his socialist commune in Walden for an article. He was also acquainted with Maurits Wagenvoort, who was on

<sup>117</sup> Elout, “Ternataansche idylle.”; for the English translation, see appendix II.

<sup>118</sup> C.K. Elout, “Merkwaardigheden van Asahan,” *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 9, 1929; for the English translation, see appendix II.

<sup>119</sup> Kemperink, “Wat wil het naturalisme?,” 45-55.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Luise Thon, *Die Sprache des Deutschen Impressionismus. Ein Beitrag für Erfassung ihrer Wesenszüge* (München: Max Hueber Verlag, 1928); Kemperink, *Van observatie tot extase*, 216-219; Anbeek, “Nederlandse naturalistische roman,” 529.

<sup>121</sup> Anbeek, “Nederlandse naturalistische roman,” 529; Kemperink, *Van observatie tot extase*, 216-219; cf. Gerben Colmjon, *De beweging van tachtig. Een cultuurhistorische verkenning in de negentiende eeuw* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1963), 240-241, 290-294.

<sup>122</sup> Frederik van Eeden, J. de Ley & Bernt Luger, *Walden in droom en daad. Walden-dagboek en notulen van Frederik van Eeden e.a. 1898-1903* (Amsterdam: Huis aan de Drie Grachten, 1980)

[Consulted through: [www.dbnl.org/tekst/eede003wald01\\_01/eede003wald01\\_01\\_0037.php](http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/eede003wald01_01/eede003wald01_01_0037.php)].



friendly terms with many of the writers of the Eighties Movement, Louis Couperus in particular.<sup>123</sup> Finally, Elout published his books about the Dutch-Indies with C.A. Mees who was married to the daughter of the important Eighties poet Albert Verwey. This circumstantial evidence indicates that it is very likely that Elout was acquainted with these literary writers and their work, which is also suggested by his reference to Verwey's poem 'Who sailed to Ambon on a summer sea?' [Wie voer naar Ambon op een zomerzee?].

"Who sailed to Ambon on a summer sea?".... I don't know anymore, who of our (at that time modern) poets, Verwey or Van Eeden, wrote the melancholic poem that starts with this line. This line stayed with me almost constantly after I had arrived at what was not a "summer sea" at all.<sup>124</sup>

Elout's use of the alliteration and assonance in his reportage can therefore be seen as an implicit statement that points to his literary inspiration. It is rather unlikely that the use of these particular stylistic devices was common practice in journalism. However, the status of Elout as one of the most esteemed journalists in the inter-war period, together with the positive reception of his series about the Indies, support my claim that reporting a literary orientation was visible kept playing an important role in the Netherlands and was appreciated as a form of quality journalism.

### ***The pivotal role of the setting***

The quotes above already made clear that the description of the environment and surroundings play an important part in the reportages. They provide a *couleur locale* that helps to convey the experience of the reporters. In the British case, the description of space is mostly limited to this elementary function, but in the French and Dutch case the setting plays a central role in the reportage series. The serial character of the reportages allows Viollis and Elout to create an elaborate framework of imagery with which they depict the tropical scenery. Through these metaphoric depictions, the reporters have created an encompassing perspective on the colony as an idyllic, and mystic or magical location - that can also be somewhat frightening at times - which is inhabited by a primitive population that needs the compassionate guidance of the people from the civilized European society. It is not an explicit opinion, but such a framework still conveys a clear picture of how reality should be interpreted.

Thus, both Viollis and Elout exploit the spatial composition in the meaning-making process of their accounts. Elout takes this the farthest as he interweaves this opposition in the spatial composition of his reportage series. A perfect example of this is his journey down the Barito River in Borneo (currently named Kalimantan). The river symbolizes the transition from a westernized society (to a certain extent the colonized parts of the Indies have copied the organized and cultivated European society) to the uncultivated way of life further inland with a concordant state of mind that is less focused on the ratio.<sup>125</sup> The symbolic status of the Barito River is strengthened by Elout's explicit reflection on his state of mind.

The River has clearly become narrower again and the high wall with primeval forest on the left, the incalculable distance of the primeval forest on the right, its unmoveable threats. What is at the

<sup>123</sup> Peter Rietbergen, "Geschiedenis als argument: het 'Bauerdebat' in *de Kroniek*, 1896," *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies* 2 (1997): 34; Francis Knikker, *Gedoemd om te mislukken? De Oostersche Bibliotheek van Uitgeverij C.A. Mees in haar sociaal-culturele en literair-historische context* [unpublished MA thesis], 45-49.

<sup>124</sup> C.K. Elout, "Molukkiade," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, June 7, 1929.

<sup>125</sup> It is interesting to note that Elout does not criticize the actual Western cultivation and civilization, but only the in his eyes surrogate civilization of the western oriented original population.

end of these endless turns? Is indeed the legendary monster dwelling there, which the Dajaks describe as some sort of rhinoceros that lives in the water? He will probably not exist, but isn't there something else, a bit less material and harder to define, some sort of essence of the River, which is slowly, in its thousands of twists, lulling me listless and absorbing me? Sometimes I have the feeling as if I am being engorged by this gluttonous green serpent and won't get out of it anymore. And I don't desire that much. I wish this could go on this way.<sup>126</sup>

The continuous personification of the river, which is written with a capital letter R as if it is a proper name, also adds to its symbolic status as an animated element of the original 'primitive' way of life. The surrender to the nature or 'soul' of the river increases as the river takes Elout deeper into Borneo. His embrace of the dream-like mindset that accompanies this experience is mirrored in his behavior and the style of his clothes:

It's fine with me this way, getting gradually unified with the monotonous mood of the environment. For my part the River does not have to end at all. I haven't been wearing my jacket for quite some time now. Tie and collar lie around somewhere in my cabin. A large part of the day I spend in my pyjamas. This listless live suits me. [...] And I allow myself to float, into Borneo.<sup>127</sup>

At the end of the journey this state of mind is suddenly gone, which is symbolically marked by the transition of the 'River', a product of nature, to a cultivated, man-made waterway (with a lower-case w): "The River has vanished. Suddenly cut off as an *Unvollendete Symphonie* [an unfinished symphony, FH]. I am still sailing on it [...] but it has simply become a waterway."<sup>128</sup>

In employing the scenic descriptions in a more elaborate way, the French and Dutch reportages differ considerably from the British ones and put across quite a different perspective on journalism as a profession. The British press seems to have been in the course of embracing the idea of journalism as a trained profession where the individual journalist is just a small part of a larger 'team effort'. Conversely, the press in both France and Holland still adhered to the belief that an account is the product of an independent artist, which is for an important part based on a natural disposition instead of trained skills.<sup>129</sup>

## Conclusion

This case study shows important disparities between the different countries, which suggest differences in the discursive development of the respective journalistic discourses. It shows that although they were employed on a modest scale, the active reporting routines moved to the center of journalism discourse. The previous chapter demonstrated the important role reflection on the reporting process plays in the reportages about the Great War. This was partially incited by the problematic influence the war situation - with its strong censorship measures - had on the reporting process. However, the reporters' emphasis on their ways of reporting also indicated the novelty of on-site reporting and the genre of the reportage. The continuous reflection and emphasis on the trustworthy nature of their observation suggests that the readership was still somewhat unaccustomed to these routines in that period. In the reportages at hand such reflection is virtually absent. Obviously this should

<sup>126</sup> Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."

<sup>127</sup> Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."

<sup>128</sup> Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."

<sup>129</sup> Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 159-160; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 277; Elliot, "Professional ideology," 181-182.

also be regarded in the light of reporter's freedom to go where he or she wanted, making continuous reflection on this aspect of the reporting process superfluous. Still, it also suggests that the routines of reporting had gained wider acceptance, even though they were not yet employed on a large scale.

In Great Britain the way these routines are employed clearly displays a tendency towards the implementation of journalistic norms that adhere to the objectivity regime. The following quote is telling in this respect. Whereas during the First World War the first hand observation was emphasized as being more trustworthy than the 'hearsay' stories the reporters received from soldiers, victims and other people involved in the war, it seems that in the British case it has lost such authority.

**The information received daily continues to be contradictory, not only as between official and unofficial sources, but as between district and district. I can only give you some first-hand impressions which I obtained during the last few days motoring back from Kabul through the Kyber, thence to Peshawar and Nowshera, and to Rawalpindi and Nathia Gali, the hot weather headquarters of the Provincial Government.<sup>130</sup>**

The reporting routines were used much more instrumental to gather the information that the public needed, which reflects their particular conception of the objectivity regime as the disconnection of information and subjective experience. Yet, impartiality, a central norm in this respect, was not seen as a necessary feature of reporting. Furthermore, the British reportages suggest that interviewing was becoming an authoritative journalistic routine, despite the relatively small scale on which the routine was employed according to the quantitative results.

The prominent role active reporting and seeking out newsworthy information play in the accounts by Viollis suggests that the active reporting routines also played an increasingly important part in French journalism. Her reportages display a mix of observation, analysis and interview that are considered typical for the reportage in contemporary journalism. This reinforces the conclusions of the previous chapter that the journalistic discourse in France has a much more progressive nature than it is generally given credit for. The way the active routines were shaped was quite different from Britain though. The textual representation of the factual reporting process showed its reliance on subjective experience and perception. Because of the subjectivity within the factual reporting explicit opinion was curtailed and journalists had to strive for impartiality. In this sense objectivity seems to have entered the debate on journalism in France, although, according to Ruellan, it was only loosely delineated and not very strong enforced. For the most part it played a strategic role in the discussion on the professional status of journalism.

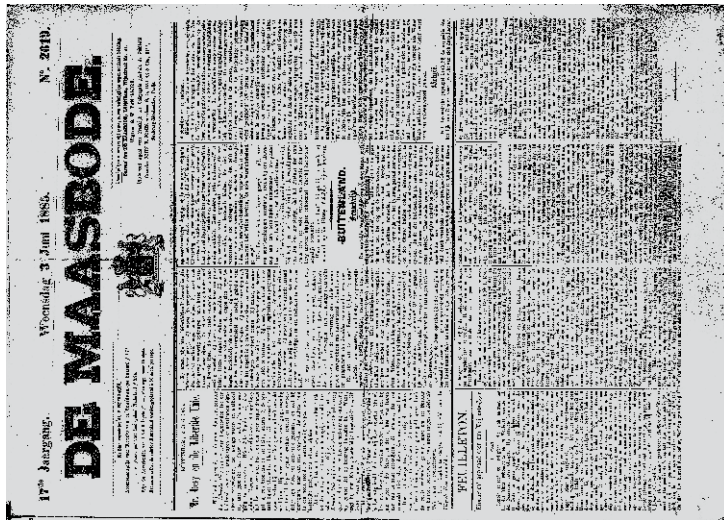
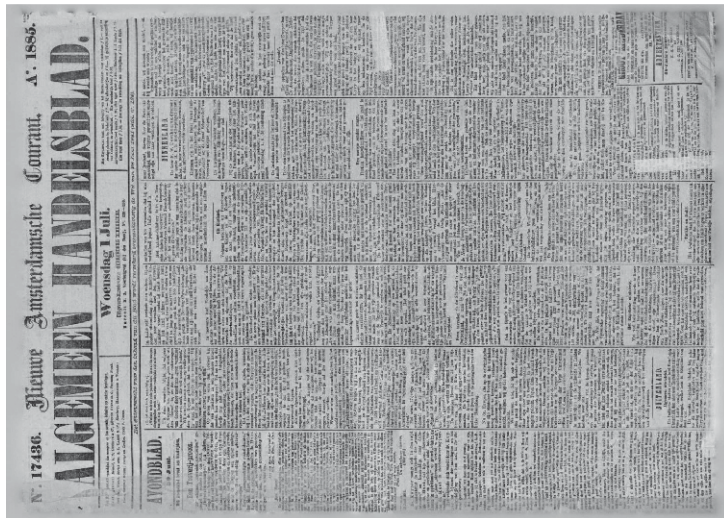
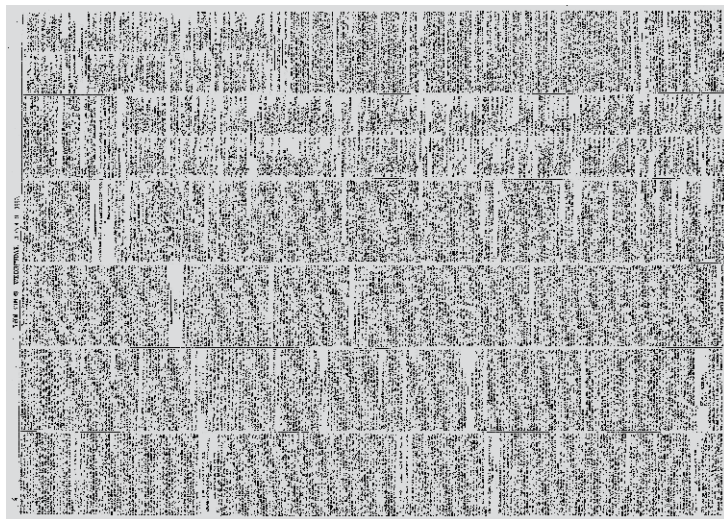
Elout's reportages confirm the quantitative results of the previous chapter that show a general reluctance to interviewing and quoting. Journalism discourse in the Netherlands mainly focused on on-site observation rather than on covering an event by eliciting information through interviewing people. Moreover, the narrative techniques that Elout employs indicate a great discursive freedom and an ongoing orientation on literature. Of the three reporters, Elout makes the most elaborate use of imagery, personification, and he is the only one who integrates symbols, and makes use of stylistic devices, like alliteration and assonance. The latter shows an ongoing orientation and inspiration by the poetics of the literary movement of the Eighties.

Thus, the results from the case study support the quantitative results with regard to the differences between the three countries. Concerning the active reporting routines, the cases show that these might have had a more authoritative position within journalistic discourse than is put forward by

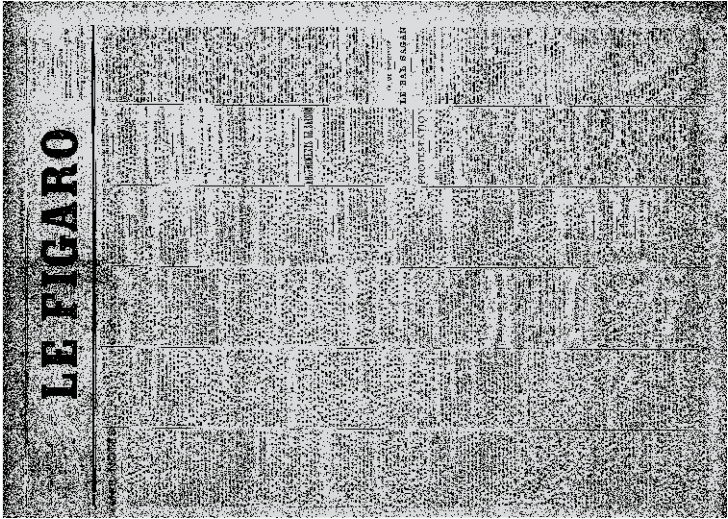
<sup>130</sup> "Outlook in India," *The Times*, August 31, 1931.

the quantitative results. This should not be seen as an attempt to downplay the fact that the scale on which these routines are employed was still very small. Nevertheless, I want to point to the possible discrepancy between the role these routines can play in the development of a professional ideal and their ubiquitous use in everyday journalism practice.

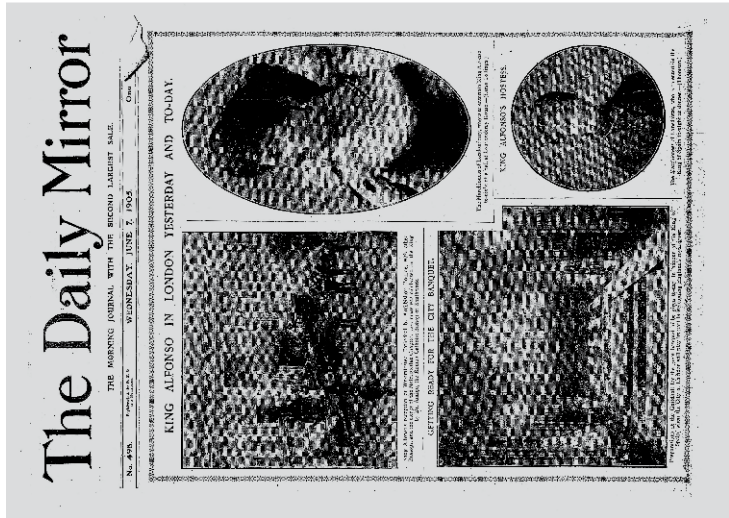
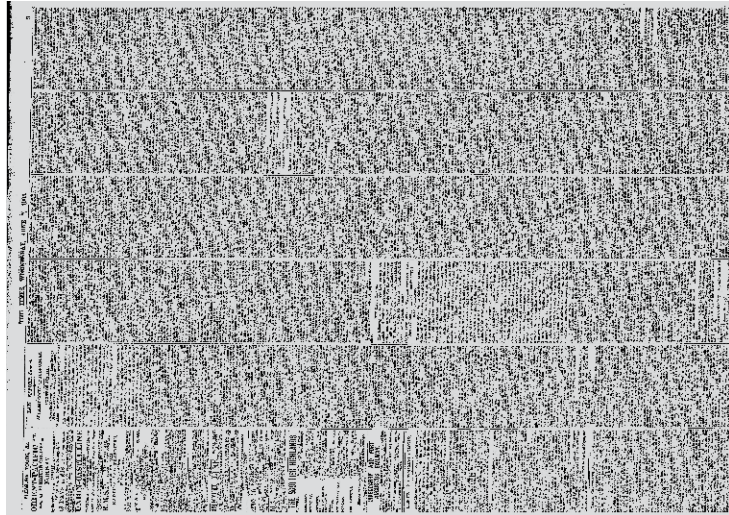
The same applies to the question about the prominence of the genre of the reportage. Based on the frequency with which the genre appeared in the newspaper and the percentage of the newshole it comprised, the genre indeed only seems to have played a modest role in the press. However, based on the prominent position in the dailies in France and the Netherlands, and the subsequent publications of book compilations of the reportage series, the reportage should still be regarded as an esteemed genre. Furthermore, it was one of the most progressive genres with regard to the active reporting routines, and played an important part in the dissemination of these routines. Thus, although reporting was not common use in journalism on a day-to-day basis, it did become an important routine, on which the professional identity of the journalist in the three respective countries was built in the inter-war period.







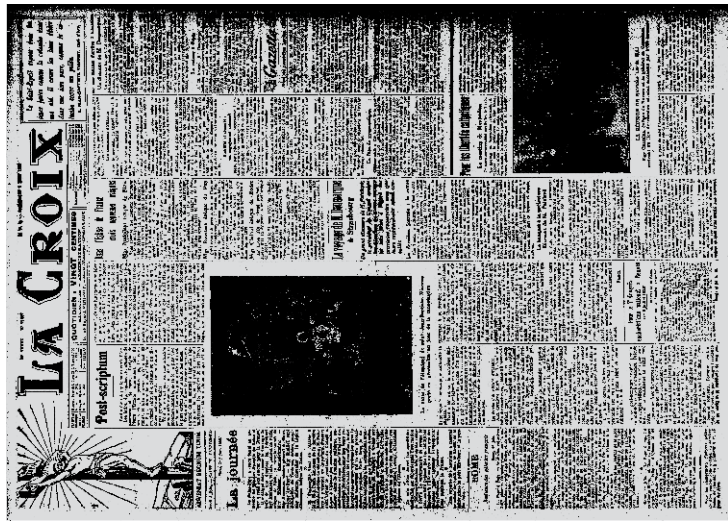
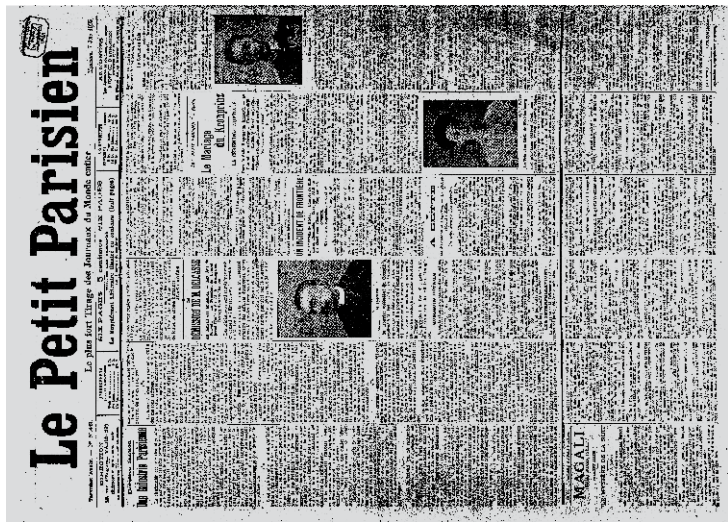
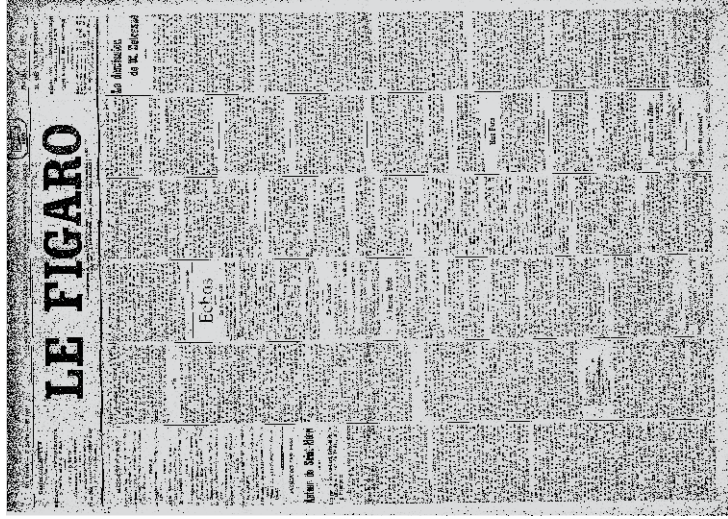




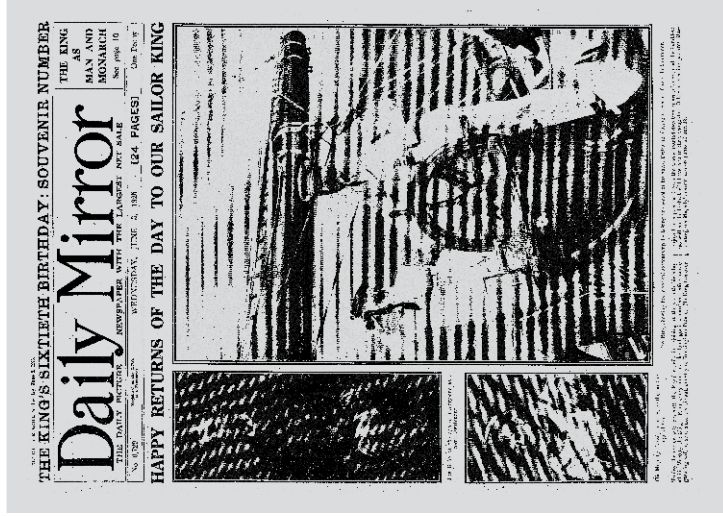
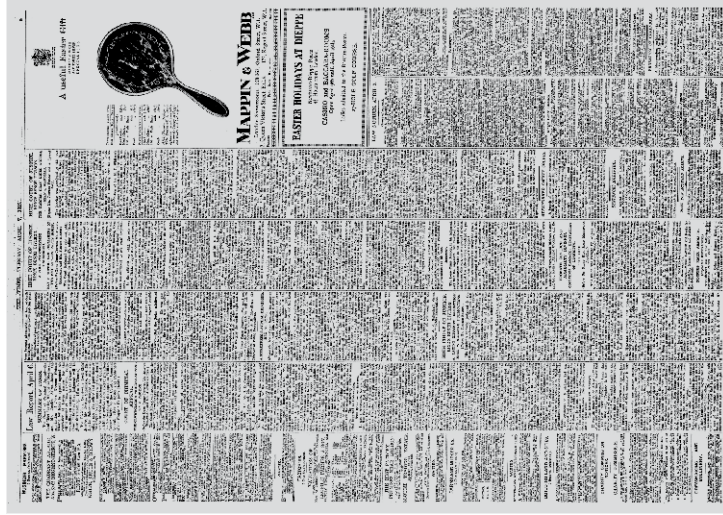


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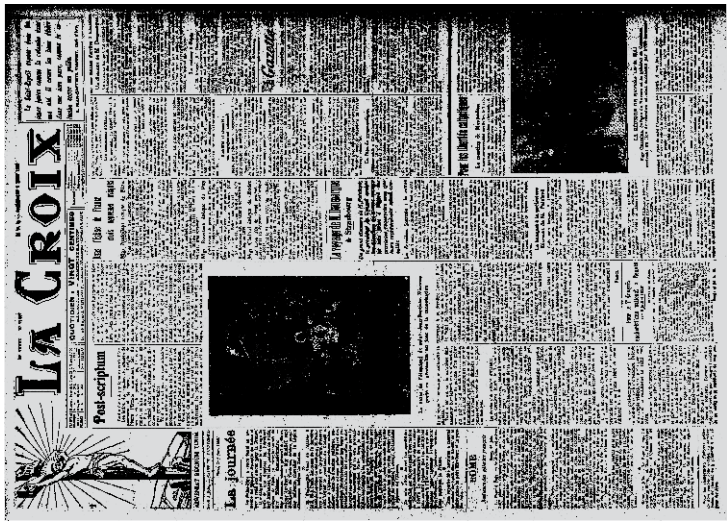
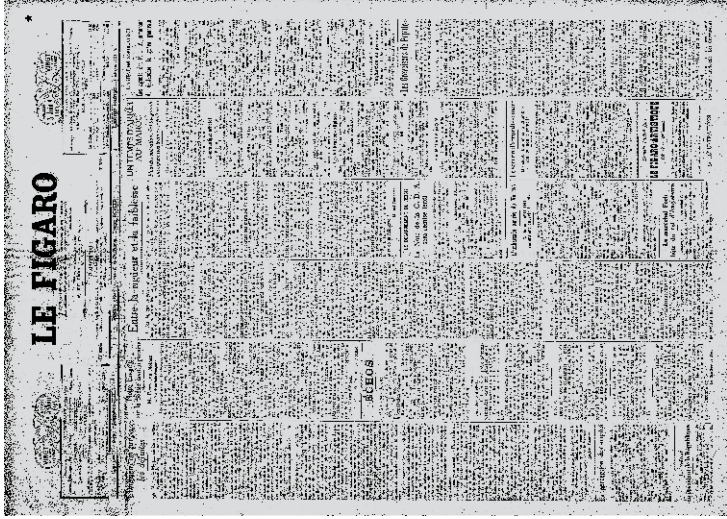


The absence of the Daily Mail is the tragic result of the combination of a fragmented digitization policy and the bureaucracy of the British Library









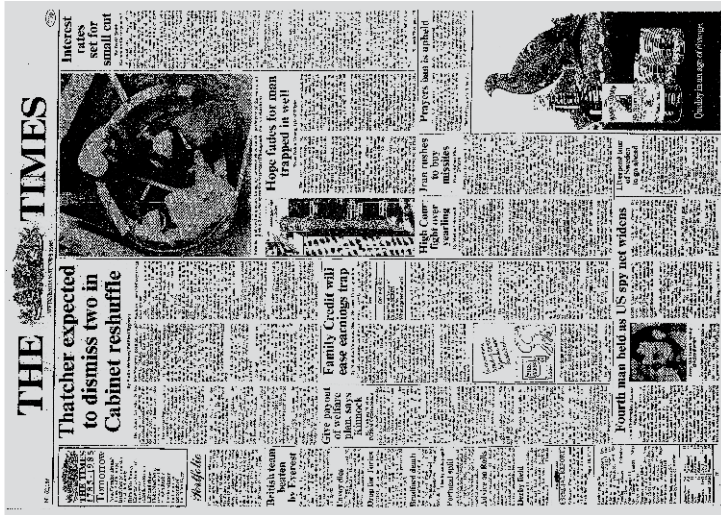




















**Daily Mail** **SUNDAY**  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1990

**I offered my sick brother one of my kidneys, but still say it's wrong for the State to urge us to be 'living donors'**

**BY MARY KENNY**

**100 pop stars, five concerts and a two-billion audience**

**GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH**

**THE world's biggest music event, the 1990 Live Aid concert, will be held on Saturday and Sunday, August 18 and 19, at Wembley Stadium, London. The event will be broadcast live on television and radio, and will be the largest music event in the world's history.**

**THE event will be the largest music event in the world's history, and will be broadcast live on television and radio. The event will be the largest music event in the world's history, and will be broadcast live on television and radio.**









# Subscribing to the objectivity regime

## 1950-1975

### Introduction

The Second World War meant an historical interlude in Western- European journalism history. Press historians in all three countries have demonstrated its strong impact on the postwar newspaper business. Especially in France and the Netherlands the press landscape was shaken up. Several newspapers ceased to exist during the war and did not reappear afterwards, whereas new, often former underground, dailies entered the field after the liberation. At first a severe paper shortage in all three countries brought the dailies temporarily under partial state control to ensure a fair paper distribution and safeguard a pluriform press landscape. This meant a temporary intermission of the fierce commercial competition and gave the dailies a strong impulse to adopt a more selective and condensed way of divulging the news.<sup>1</sup> In this initial period the structure of the press landscape was thoroughly discussed. The fact that the majority of the press had not ceased publication during the war in the occupied countries or even collaborated with the German regime instigated a fundamental discussion about the press. Many people in France and the Netherlands were appalled by these dailies and blamed the commercial foundation of the press for giving a perverse incentive in this respect. Britain was less directly impacted by the war, but the strict censorship in this country also fired a discussion about the way their commercial goals muzzled the dailies' critical attitude towards the government in this case.<sup>2</sup>

Based on the national press histories, the outcome of these debates differed considerably in the three countries, and had a long-lasting influence on the development of the postwar press. France bestowed its faith in the government as a regulating authority to keep the press from falling prey to ruthless commercialism, in which the market-driven strive for profit was believed to make journalists forget about their responsibility towards democracy and the people.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, in Britain a commercial foundation kept on being regarded as a fundamental prerequisite for a free and independent press.<sup>4</sup> In the Netherlands the fear of the perverse impulses of commercialization also played an important role in the debate, but the benefits of a financial independent press were also emphasized, resulting in an intermediate position between the French embrace of state regulation and the British focus on the free market principles.<sup>5</sup>

In spite of the institutional differences, journalism in the respective countries entered a new era. Guided by a shared goal towards an independent and professional journalism practice they

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- 1 Gerard Mulder, "De redigerende hand. Stijl en ordening in de schrijvende journalistiek," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et. al. (Amsterdam: AUP, 2002), 148-149; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 176-178; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 305-307; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 145-147.
  - 2 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 173-177; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 143-144, 169, 239-245; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 242-243, 259-260.
  - 3 Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 144-145; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 274.
  - 4 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 177-179; cf. Murdock & Golding, "Structure, ownership," 133-136, 138-140.
  - 5 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 259-260.

moved closer to each other in their conceptions of journalism as discursive practice. In France and the Netherlands the years directly after war showed a short period of leftist idealism with regard to the organization of the press where commercialism only played a minor role. These initial years also proved the difficulty to implement this perspective while remaining financially healthy. This heightened idealism was therefore not granted a long life and in the 1950s the press returned more or less to the way it had functioned in the prewar period.<sup>6</sup> For the Dutch press this meant a return to its pillarized structure, but prior research has shown that already during the 1950s the first seeds of depillarization were planted. In all three countries the 1950s is conveyed in the existing scholarship conveys as a period in which the press was catching its breath, while the debate on its future course of development was going on.<sup>7</sup>

As scholars have illustrated, these ongoing debates manifested itself throughout the 1960s in the propagation of journalism's civic duty and the subsequent necessity of an independent and more unbiased press. The active reporting routines were embraced, which is reflected in a growing prominence of the interview and the reportage across the board. Moreover, reporting became connected to norms like accountability, impartiality, detachment and transparency. As a result, the objectivity regime became fully engrained in journalistic discourse and further delineated journalism practice. Yet, as Schudson and Ward argue it was never enforced with the same rigidity as within the American context.<sup>8</sup> In France the personal touch of the reporter was for example never effaced entirely - which I will discuss in the following chapter.<sup>9</sup> As Philippe Gaillard wrote in his work on the reportage in 1966:

Being objective is not synonymous with being plain. All the rules that we have identified in this book are intended to provide a too, a working method. The practice is personal. Even in the more mundane issues a journalist can put lots of his talent. But talent is the only thing than cannot be taught.<sup>10</sup>

Nonetheless, it meant a significant change in the characteristics of the reporting practice, especially in France and the Netherlands. Under influence of the emphasis on independence, impartiality and detachment, the personalized and lifelike portrayal of an event signaled an untrustworthy subjectivity. Information was therefore further divorced from personal experience.<sup>11</sup> Based on this it might be expected that the reportage with its subjective characteristics would fall from grace as a journalistic genre. Instead, as my results suggest the genre became common practice and was reshaped in a way that it could hide its subjective elements. This supports Zelizer's argument about the ambivalent status of eyewitness reporting; because of the first hand status of the information it has a strong appeal, but at the same time that particular feature also incites anxiety about the subjectivity of the information.<sup>12</sup>

Based on my analysis I argue that the growing prominence of the objectivity regime got an important impulse from the commercial struggle between the serious and the popular press. After the 1950s, the Dutch press landscape was depillarizing and in France journalism and politics became more detached from each other as well. The scale of the individual newspaper businesses

<sup>6</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 305-306.

<sup>7</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 176-180; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 255-268; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 271-282, 288-293.

<sup>8</sup> Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 166-167; Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 482-487; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 123-127.

<sup>9</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 126-134.

<sup>10</sup> Philippe Gaillard cited in: Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 126.

<sup>11</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 145-154; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 371, 378-382; Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 150.

<sup>12</sup> Zelizer, "On 'having been there'," 411-412.

increased quickly. To remain financially healthy the production process had to be rationalized on almost every front. Within this context of growing commercialism, the competition between the different types of dailies grew and the gulf between the serious and popular press was emphasized in the debate about journalistic standards.<sup>13</sup> The serious dailies had fully embraced the active reporting routines, which had been pioneered by the popular dailies, but had to set themselves apart from their popular counterparts. The former connected these routines to the norms of objectivity and journalism's civic duty, thereby establishing these routines firmly as the undisputed quality standards of journalism. Furthermore, because of this clear-cut delineation of quality, the reflective press was gradually side-tracked from the 1960s onward.

The mutual relation between the serious and popular press and the particular way they developed throughout the postwar period in the three countries is for an important part delineated by the structure of the press landscape. Research shows that the market orientation of British journalism led to a further rationalization of the profiles of the different dailies. This resulted in a growing divergence between serious and popular papers, which was reinforced by the growing competition of the radio and especially television.<sup>14</sup> In France, the commercial rationale also resurfaced and dailies like *France-Soir* picked up where the market leader of the prewar popular press, *Paris-Soir*, had left off.<sup>15</sup> However, as press historians have pointed out, the curtailing of the press market by the state made the popular mass press vulnerable, and the success of a paper like *France-Soir* declined throughout the 1960s. In the Netherlands the prewar uniformity of the journalistic discourse was left behind, and the profile of the popular press was carved out more clearly. Still, the disparities between the different types of dailies were smaller than in Britain.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, from the Second World War onwards the competition the press had from the radio was exacerbated and from roughly the 1960s onwards television gradually developed into a force dailies had to reckon with. Both radio and television started to focus more on covering the news, developing their own journalistic forms, which appealed to a large audience. The rise of these alternative news media forced the dailies to reconsider their position and role within the media landscape. Unfortunately this relation has not been researched systematically yet. My data offers support for the claims scholars have made about how journalism development in the postwar period was influenced by the increasing speed with which both the radio and television could deliver the news, and also the visual appeal of television in particular.

## The Second World War and its aftermath

In comparison to Britain, the war influenced the French and Dutch press the most as these countries were both occupied by the German Nazi regime. The British newspaper business was only impacted indirectly. The most important consequence was the reintroduction of a strict censorship regime by its own government. Furthermore, like their continental counterparts, the dailies in Britain experienced a severe paper shortage.<sup>17</sup>

As press historians have demonstrated, the press in France and the Netherlands experienced a

13 Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 333-334; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 193, 197-204; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 305-307; Colin Sparks, "Popular Journalism: Theories and Practice," in *Journalism and Popular Culture*, ed. Peter Dahlgren & Colin Sparks (London/Newbury Park/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992), 37.

14 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 177-178, 180-181, 192-194.

15 Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 307.

16 Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 333-335; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 364-375.

17 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 176; cf. Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 169; René Vos, *Niet voor publicatie. De legale Nederlandse pers tijdens de Duitse bezetting* (Amsterdam: Sijthoff, 1988), 298-310.



growing influence on the editorial line of the dailies. Germany envisioned the national newspapers as a pivotal part of their propaganda strategy, which should win over the French and Dutch population to the Nazi doctrine. This process of assuming power over the newspaper business, and propagating the Nazi doctrine in the columns progressed gradually. The Germans wanted to rouse as little attention as possible in order to maintain the belief that there was still a free and pluralist press in place. By respecting, to a certain extent of course, the independence of the dailies they hoped to ensure the reader's normal reading habits and their trust in the daily press and subsequently stealthily disseminate the Nazi ideology among the population.<sup>18</sup> At first the German regime tried to interfere as little as necessary with the press landscape in both countries. This initial leniency of the authorities was an attempt to remain inconspicuous. In this phase the press was expected and encouraged to show a loyal attitude towards the occupier, but such a positive editorial line was not rigorously enforced yet.<sup>19</sup> When this strategy proved unsuccessful Germany took matters into their own hands. Dailies were merged together, and the editorial staff and editors-in-chief were replaced in order to transform the dailies in clear-cut outlets of Nazi propaganda.<sup>20</sup>

Dailies struggled with questions about the right way to deal with the German interference. Should they cease publication or stay in business and try to offer as much counterweight as possible? In France, which was divided in a northern German zone and a southern collaborating French zone around Vichy, most dailies initially kept on publishing - because of the division some dailies even had two versions. *Le Petit Parisien* and *Le Matin* quickly became semi-official propaganda outlets. *Le Figaro*, *Le Temps*, and *Paris-Soir* first moved to the southern zone, but under influence of the increasing censorship they ceased publication in 1942. A few papers, like *La Croix*, kept on publishing in what Martin characterizes as a "guérilla de plume" against the German authorities.<sup>21</sup> With regard to the national press, in the Netherlands only *de Volkskrant* ceased publication out of protest. The large majority of the dailies kept in business and ended up as obvious propaganda outlets for the Nazi regime.<sup>22</sup>

In response to the demise of reliable news reporting, which manifested itself particularly in the coverage of news about the war or related (international) political issues, underground newspapers emerged. Research has demonstrated that these dailies tried to offer more truthful information about these matters, but also functioned as a way to voice counterpropaganda. Because of the lack of means that were necessary to make a professional newspaper it meant going back to basics. As a result the underground press often consisted of - or at least started out as - rather amateurishly printed papers, which resembled small, handwritten pamphlets. Some of these papers developed into more professionally printed moderately sized papers with six or more pages. Overall, the underground press contained - unsurprisingly - much unverified information and blatant counter-propaganda. The people working for these papers often lacked journalistic experience and training. In general, the verification of information was hardly possible due to the war and it was even harder because of the clandestine status of the papers. In addition, the people writing for these underground papers were not really attempting to write a balanced account. They were obviously highly partisan and wanted to offer a counterweight to German propaganda.<sup>23</sup> Press historians have pointed out that this lack of professional experience, both on the level of journalism practice and on the level of running

<sup>18</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 126-128; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 218-222.

<sup>19</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 127; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 327-328; Vos, *Niet voor publicatie*, 15.

<sup>20</sup> Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 330-335; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 237-248; Vos, *Niet voor publicatie*, 204-213, 223-226.

<sup>21</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 237-248; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 126-131.

<sup>22</sup> Vos, *Niet voor publicatie*, 204-213, 223-226.

<sup>23</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 239-241; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 131-133.

a newspaper business, would be an important factor in the failure of many of these underground papers to keep in business after the war.<sup>24</sup>

The fresh and untrained journalists of these papers played an important role in the debate about the desired reshaping of the press in the years directly after the war. Especially in France and in the Netherlands, they blamed the commercial foundation of the newspaper business for the collaboration of several dailies. In their eyes the owners and journalists of these papers had made too many ethical concessions to the occupying authorities in order to keep their businesses alive. Such behavior was regarded as indirect support for the Nazi regime. Scholars have shown that these critics, in particular the journalists of the underground press, were the ones that were vehemently against the return of the dailies that had kept on publishing, and in general they wanted to thoroughly reform the media system by curtailing commercialism.<sup>25</sup> In Great Britain such voices in favor of similar reforms were also heard. However, they were not directly linked to the experiences during the war. The critique on the commercialization was a continuation of the debate that was instigated before the war about the threat of press concentration to the pluriformity of the press landscape.<sup>26</sup>

The war had shown the devastating things mankind was capable of. In the eyes of many people, this horrific period had proved the potential of the press to influence the image of and ideas about society of large groups of people. The years directly after the war, the extent of the horror became even more evident. Questions about how this could have happened and convictions that a repetition of history had to be prevented at all cost were often voiced in the aftermath. Within this context of moral outrage, people repeatedly pointed to the highly reprehensible behavior of the many dailies that stayed in business, which had to be penalized accordingly. As the existing scholarship clearly demonstrates, this process of judgment was emotionally and politically charged. To safeguard the fairness of the decision process a press purification council was put together in France as well as in the Netherlands, which was assigned the task of deciding over the future of the dailies that had kept in business during the war. The entire decision process raised many voices and the debate was rife with emotion. In France many titles were banished, but the severity of these decisions can be doubted as several dailies just reappeared under a new name that was not tainted with suspicions of collaboration with the German occupiers.<sup>27</sup> A perfect example of this is *Le Temps*, which was banned after the war by the press purification council, which neglected all evidence of resistance to the German authorities. Its successor, *Le Monde*, first published in 1944, was printed on the printing presses of *Le Temps*, had more or less the same editorial staff, and was an exact copy of *Le Temps* with regard to lay-out.<sup>28</sup>

In the Netherlands, Wolf's history of *De Telegraaf* has illustrated that the debate around this paper exemplifies the heated emotions nature of the debate and shows the vehemence with which *De Telegraaf* was condemned. The understandable feelings of rage, grief and desperation were still fresh and obscured a nuanced perspective on the nature of the role of this daily that had kept on publishing during the war. Especially the former underground press campaigned against the reappearance of the daily, which was in part infused by the fact that they used the printing facilities of *De Telegraaf* pending the decision about its future. On the other hand, the political left supported strict measures against the paper as part of their goals to reform the way the media landscape was institutionally organized in the Netherlands. The decision about the future of *De Telegraaf* had to be

<sup>24</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 258-259; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 305-306.

<sup>25</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 242-243; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 239-145.

<sup>26</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 177-180.

<sup>27</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 276-279; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 141-143; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 242-248.

<sup>28</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 279-280; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 181-190.

made by a 'purification committee', the CPZ (*Commissie voor de Perszuivering*), which in 1946 banned the name *De Telegraaf* for thirty years. The daily lodged an appeal against this decision. Anticipating the final legal verdict in 1949, the paper was the subject of an emotional debate about its role during the occupation and its right to a second chance. In the end, the court of appeal nullified the verdict, stating that the image of *De Telegraaf* as the symbol of journalistic collaboration was a caricature of reality, and allowed the paper to recommence publication.<sup>29</sup> The accuracy of this verdict is confirmed by Wolf's careful inquiry into this issue. She acknowledges that the editors operated in a complex ethical grey area, about which it is hard to reach a uniform and unequivocal judgment. However, the image of the paper as deliberately collaborating with the Nazi regime is refuted and she argues that such an assessment is based on the reputation of the paper as cherishing profitability and sensationalism over public service and facts rather than on a detailed examination of this issue.<sup>30</sup>

In the years directly after the war the press landscape in France and the Netherlands changed considerably. In France several renowned titles, like *Le Petit Parisien*, *Paris-Soir*, *Le Matin*, and *Le Temps* were not allowed to reappear. At the same time, the emergence of the underground press resulted in the introduction of many new newspapers to the journalistic domain, like *Combat* and *Défense de la France* (which changed its title into *France-Soir* that same year) in France, and *Trouw*, *Het Parool*, and *Vrij Nederland* in the Netherlands. Moreover, in the changing press landscape dailies that had been prominent before the war gradually withered away.

All these postwar fluctuations in the spectrum of the available newspapers and their position within the press landscape challenges the continuity of my particular research design. For instance, *Le Petit Parisien* disappeared directly after war and *De Maasbode* was marginalized before it was absorbed by *De Tijd* in 1959. For that reason, *Le Petit Parisien* was substituted in the sample with *France-Soir*, the initial market leader in postwar France that presented itself clearly as a popular daily. Furthermore, the financially slumping *Maasbode* was substituted with *de Volkskrant*, which had developed into the leading Catholic paper after the war.<sup>31</sup> In the selection of the substitutes, the profile of the chosen dailies is as close as possible to the disappearing ones. Nevertheless, substitution is never a perfect fit, which inevitably influenced the data. *France-Soir* for instance was less focused on politics than *Le Petit Parisien* and *de Volkskrant* was shedding its Catholic feathers during the postwar period and transformed from a partisan into an independent and detached daily. In my analysis I have tried to discount for these differences as best as possible. Moreover, as I will argue below, the development of these dailies does fit in with respectively the increasingly clear profile of a popular press in the French press that had started with *Paris-Soir* and the broad societal process of depillarization that was reflected in the development of the press in the Netherlands.<sup>32</sup>

## Structuring the press landscape - between the devil and the deep sea

In essence, the discussion about the future of the press after the war was a variation on the recurring question whether a commercial press - aiming for profit - would ultimately sacrifice their allegiance to the truth and their moral responsibility and integrity for financial gain. The experiences during the war and the subsequent postwar debate gave an important impulse to the idea that newspapers and journalists had a civic duty. Their role as responsible actors in the process of informing the population

<sup>29</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 319-334; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 246-250.

<sup>30</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 293-298.

<sup>31</sup> Vermeulen, *De Maasbode*, 366-372.

<sup>32</sup> Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 13-14; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 243-246.

and facilitating a solid democracy was emphasized more pointedly.<sup>33</sup> As mentioned the war played a smaller role in this process in Britain. Still, scholars have argued that the strict censorship in Britain, during which the dailies danced to the government's piping in order to maintain in business, did highlight the important public role and responsibility the press had.<sup>34</sup> Together with the prewar anxiety towards press concentration on the pluriformity of the press, the experience of censorship reignited the debate on the standards journalism should live up to. In all countries, the focus in this debate was on the necessity of a professional framework that developed the civic duty of journalism. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s this societal task became associated with a journalism practice, in which the active reporting routines were governed much more strongly by the objectivity regime.

The newspaper shortage in the first couple of years after the war is regarded as a catalyst in the development of this professional framework. Apart from bringing the press once again under state control in this period, it forced journalists to reconsider the way information was presented and structured. The size of the dailies was curbed by the state, which also regulated the distribution of paper in order to safeguard a pluriform press landscape. In all three countries, the dailies were reduced to two or four pages; the number slowly increased as the situation improved.<sup>35</sup> On top of that, the British government also regulated the advertising in the dailies. Not more than 40% of the space of the morning dailies and 45% of the evening dailies could be spent on advertisements. Moreover, the advertisement revenues were redistributed between the dailies, which, as Williams points out, was highly beneficial to the papers that had a weak commercial position.<sup>36</sup>

Press historians have argued that the subsequent shortage of editorial space emphasized as well as showcased the importance of concise writing and a stricter selection based on news value only showing what was out of the ordinary. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s this new way of writing became much more strongly connected to the growing importance of professional values that centered on the independent position of the dailies, and on the necessity of an impartial and detached stance vis-à-vis the news that was covered. In this period objectivity became an important notion in the discussion about and legitimization of journalism. As a result, the norms of the objectivity regime were accepted more fully. In France and the Netherlands the subjectivity was removed from the reporting process and the personal experience was divorced from the information in the articles; next to the already existing impartiality standard. In turn, in the British press balanced coverage was now adopted as an important guideline, complementing the already implemented detached way of reporting.<sup>37</sup>

The ideas about the way to safeguard journalistic independence differed between the countries. After the paper shortage was resolved at the start of the 1950s, state regulation was lifted in Great Britain and the Netherlands. In the Netherlands a few papers, like *Het Parool* and *Vrij Nederland*, regarded the commercial foundation of the press harmful to journalism. They rejected the market principles by choosing to organize themselves in public corporations, in which the focus was on their public role first instead of on their profitability. Still, the popularity of this corporate form was marginal. Press historians have demonstrated that this debate was dominated by the idea that a financially independent press was the best guarantee for press freedom and journalistic and moral

33 Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 143-144; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 242-243, 259-260.

34 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 175-179.

35 Cf. Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 169; Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 148-149; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 260; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 176-177.

36 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 176.

37 Thomas Ferenczi, "L'éthique des journalistes au xix<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Le Temps des médias* 1, no.1 (2003): 190-199; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 378-382; Delporte, *Les journalistes*, 411-417; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 260-262; Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 148-150; Elliot, "Professional ideology," 188; cf. Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 488-489.

integrity, which applied *a fortiori* for Great Britain.<sup>38</sup> With the return of the free-market principles in both countries, the competition between dailies for circulation and advertising revenue immediately resurfaced. In the Netherlands the traditional titles kept in business, but several of the newly established underground papers could not keep afloat. These papers either ceased publication, fused with other titles, or transformed into weeklies.<sup>39</sup> In Britain this resulted in the end of several dailies. The commercial weaker dailies that had been protected in the first years under state control quickly vanished. However, dailies with a healthy circulation, like the *Daily Herald* and the *Star* - the *Herald* sold 1.26 million copies a day - also went bankrupt, because they were not able to attract enough advertisement.

Only in France did the ideas about a less commercialized press actually lead to a long-lasting restructuring of the institutional organization of the press landscape. By law newspapers were considered to be non-profit organizations with an important societal task and, as scholars have pointed out, their role in society was deemed too important to let the dailies fall victim to the ruthless free-market principles.<sup>40</sup> For that reason, the French government took over control of the crucial institutions with regard to the newspaper production, like wire services, production of newsprint, printing companies, advertising agencies, and the distribution of the papers, which can be regarded as a way of indirectly subsidizing the dailies. Dailies were thus highly dependent on the services provided by the state. Private ownership of newspapers was maintained, but it was seriously curtailed and had to comply with certain regulations and laws to prohibit an overly strong press concentration or commercialization. It was for instance not allowed to own more than one newspaper, nor was it allowed for newspaper companies to own a company that was involved in the above mentioned facilitating services. The state also curtailed the possibilities to branch out to other - more lucrative - lines of business in order to keep the encompassing concern financially healthy.<sup>41</sup>

## Circulation, diffusion and concentration

As the government actively curtailed the commercial development, the French press was particularly vulnerable in the postwar period. As Jean-Marie Charon argued, the French press was, commercially speaking, in limbo. The state interference warranted the survival of most papers, but it prevented press companies from blossoming. All these regulations made the newspaper business commercially unattractive for advertisers and businessmen alike.<sup>42</sup> The minor role that advertisement had played in the business model of the dailies in the prewar period thus persisted after the war and press concentration and commercial expansion was limited to a relatively small scale. Especially compared to other European countries, like Great Britain and the Netherlands, the advertisement revenues in France were very low. Scholars have demonstrated that this put a heavy strain on the circulation number, being quite directly responsible for the survival of a daily.<sup>43</sup>

The available diffusion figures convey that only the first years after the war circulation really flourished. From a combined circulation of approximately 11 million dailies (261 papers on every 1000 French inhabitants) right before the war it rapidly grew out to 15 million readers in 1946

<sup>38</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 259; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 177-179.

<sup>39</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 177-178; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 260-261.

<sup>40</sup> Raymond Kuhn, *The Media in France* (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), 40-42; cf. Patrick Champagne, "The 'Double Dependency': The Journalistic Field Between Politics and Markets," in *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, ed. Rodney Benson & Erik Neveu (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 50-53.

<sup>41</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 144-145, 178-179; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 288-291.

<sup>42</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 288-290.

<sup>43</sup> Kuhn, *Media in France*, 35-37.

(370 on every 1000). This peak was related to the initial postwar period in which a new fervor marked the newspaper business. A new idealistic perspective on the press gave an impulse to the establishment of new newspaper ventures. In spite of all the horrors the war had brought about, the left-leaning politicians, intellectuals and journalists also saw the opportunity to make a fresh start. Several traditional dailies had disappeared and many new contenders entered the field. However, press histories show that this phase of prosperity and idealism was only short-lived. In spite of the regulation and support of the French government many of these newly established dailies were not able to keep afloat. Circulation fell back to 9.5 million in 1952 (218 on every 1000). Only dailies that had experience with running a company in the newspaper business and adopted a moderate political orientation or none at all remained in business. It points to the importance for the survival of a newspaper to have a solid commercial foundation.

The elevated idealism and critique on commercialism directly after the war could not prevent the press to at least partially return to the business models of the prewar period, where news was regarded as a commodity and the wishes of a mass public were heeded better. From that moment onward general circulation grew again to 13 million in 1967, but as the figures divulge the diffusion per capita stayed below the level of the prewar period (between 252 on every 1000 in 1960 and 238 on every 1000 in 1970).<sup>44</sup> Moreover, as research has shown, the national press did not really benefit, for the prominence of the regional press, which had already been growing before the war, had kept on expanding. Although the Paris-based dailies provided the dominant voices in the public debate, this did not translate into a dominant share of the circulation. The national press was only responsible for 39% of the entire circulation and in this respect they were thus clearly surpassed by the regional dailies.<sup>45</sup> The only national dailies without a large readership that could survive were the ones that were backed up by an investor, political party or press group. *La Croix* for instance was part of the successful Catholic media concern Bayard Presse, which can explain the steady development of this daily seemingly undisturbed by the wishes of a mass readership.

The circulation number was obviously also important in Great Britain and the Netherlands, but in a more indirect way than in France. High circulation numbers attracted advertisers and co-determined how much could be charged for advertisements.<sup>46</sup> In these countries the general circulation displayed a larger and steadier growth than in France. The general circulation in the Netherlands, which had been approximately 2 million in 1939 (230 papers per 1000 inhabitants), went up to 2.8 million in 1946 (311 per 1000) to 3.2 million in 1960 (280 per 1000) and 4 million in 1970 (320 per 1000).<sup>47</sup> In Great Britain the circulation of the national dailies had been 10.6 million in 1939 (262 papers per 1000 inhabitants), which went up from 12 million right after the war to 16 million throughout the 1950s and 1960s (514 per 1000 in 1960) and fell back a little in the 1970s to approximately 15 million (463 per 1000 in 1970).<sup>48</sup> Press historians point to the fact that, contrary to France, the national press held a much stronger position in these countries. Within Britain and the Netherlands, the regional dailies had a hard time keeping afloat. Especially in Great Britain the regional press was struck hard and was not able to attract enough advertising, resulting in the downfall of several titles or forcing them to merge with others.<sup>49</sup> In general, the commercial situation of the national press in the Netherlands and Britain was much better than in France in the 1950s and 1960s.

<sup>44</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 305-312; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 21, 28; cf. Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 124-127.

<sup>45</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 304, 312; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 28-32.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 178.

<sup>47</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 558-559.

<sup>48</sup> Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 28-29; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 21, 28.

<sup>49</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 178-181.

What reinforced this divergence and made France's position extra precarious were the overhead costs that increased considerably in the first decades after the war, assigning an even more crucial role to advertisement revenue for the viability of a daily. The costs of producing dailies were rising. Paper might have been widely available after the 1950s, but its price kept on rising in the following years. Furthermore, the salaries of the journalists and printers, especially in France and the Netherlands, also increased rapidly, which was in line with the general rise in prosperity. Finally, the introduction of new technology in the 1960s and early 1970s, like offset printing and the first computerized systems to organize the editorial content, offered new opportunities to make the dailies more attractive visually and to streamline the production process. Pushed by the necessity of keeping up with the competition dailies needed to make extensive and costly investments.<sup>50</sup>

As the existing scholarship points out, new technological possibilities made it possible to reduce supporting staff in the production of the dailies, but cuts in this area were not enough. Streamlining the manning levels within the dailies was only one part of a larger rationalization process of the newspaper business that was necessary to maintain financially healthy. In the 1960s this led to substantial press concentration, in which dailies tried to share the overhead costs.<sup>51</sup> Such commercial mergers had already been quite common in Great Britain before the Second World War. Yet, in the postwar period the scale of these larger concerns was growing, causing their character to change. After the high profile press barons the new newspaper owners had a more retreated and commercially rationalized management style. Press barons were newspaper men at heart. Chalaby has shown for instance that besides being a smart entrepreneur and a man who was committed to certain political convictions, Lord Northcliffe was also genuinely engaged with the way a newspaper performed its societal role and how journalism was practiced at his dailies.<sup>52</sup> Most new owners were less involved and interested in journalism as such. Some of these new media tycoons, with *Daily Mirror*-owner Cecil King as a prime example, considered owning a newspaper as a way to influence politics directly. Yet, most new owners saw a newspaper mainly as a means to achieve their goal of making a profit. This was also noticeable in the way in which the concerns gradually branched out and did not solely earn their money in (print)journalism.<sup>53</sup>

In the Netherlands and France this meant that for the first time dailies teamed up with several of their competitors and formed large encompassing media concerns. In France, though, press concentration could not manifest itself on the same large scale due to the post-war laws that curtailed the emergence of such large commercial conglomerates. For the French newspaper businesses it therefore meant a continuous struggle, but compared to the prewar period they seemed to have commercialized further and were, apart from *La Croix*, more in line with their British and Dutch counterparts with regard to the amount of advertisement (Graphs 8.1 & 8.2).<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 190-194; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 327-331; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 332.

<sup>51</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 190-192; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 332; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 324-330; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 35-36.

<sup>52</sup> Chalaby, "No Ordinary Press Owners," 625-628.

<sup>53</sup> Murdock & Golding, "Structure, ownership," 141-146; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 188-190.

<sup>54</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 330-333; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 223-224; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 305-313, 324-327.

## From a press landscape to a media landscape

Press concentration was not only necessary because the playing field of the press was changing in all three countries in the postwar period but also because the dailies experienced the growing influence of radio and television.<sup>55</sup> The rising general prosperity in the 1950s and 1960s can explain the growing percentage of people owning a radio and a television set as the available figures convey.

In the 1950s the radio experienced its golden years, strongly influenced by the important part it had played in covertly keeping suppressed people informed during the war. Radio therefore focused more on news than before the war and, at the same time, reached more people because radio sets were already affordable for most people.<sup>56</sup> Still, research into the development of radio in this period indicates that this did not have a strong influence on the commercial or journalistic position of the press. Furthermore, radio was part of public broadcasting without commercials and thus did not threaten the advertisement income of the dailies.<sup>57</sup>

This gradually changed as television developed into a mass medium. In the 1920s and 1930s engineers were exploring the opportunities of the first television broadcasting technology, which had led to experimental broadcasts in the 1930s. As television scholars point out, such initial endeavors mainly took place in the USA, Great Britain, France and Germany. In 1936 the BBC was the first broadcast company in Europe to have regular television broadcasts, which was followed by France in 1938. Due to the technological restrictions and the way television was envisioned it was mostly radio that carried on with visual means. The war brought an end to these initial developments of the medium, and only after the war did television really take off as a mass medium.<sup>58</sup> Although the embrace of the television did not develop as fast as in America with 65% of its households owning a television set by 1955, Britain shows a similar development in this respect.<sup>59</sup> In 1955 already 40%<sup>60</sup> of the households owned one (95 on every 1000 inhabitants), which had grown out to 80% by 1960 (211 on 1000 inhabitants).<sup>61</sup> The increased television public was noticed by advertisers, who regarded television as a new means of reaching an even larger crowd than the newspaper readership. As the only public channel did not allow advertisement, they started lobbying for a second commercial channel on which they could extol the virtues of their goods. With the introduction of a commercially funded second channel broadcasted by ITV, commercial television established itself. From that particular moment onward television had a strong impact on the media landscape and the advertising market.<sup>62</sup> Press historians argue that this commercial competition hit the regional press the hardest and many regional dailies went bankrupt or had to merge. The national press did not experience such severe negative consequences, but the dailies did have to deal with a new competitor on the market. Especially mid-market dailies, like the *Daily Mail* targeted an audience with a similar profile. The readers of the up-market dailies, like *The Times* were not considered heavy television viewers,

55 Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 70-71; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 241-242; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 255-256, 282-284.

56 Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 101, 151-152; Huub Wijffjes, "Veelkleurige radiogemeenschappen 1930-1960," in *Een eeuw van beeld en geluid. Cultuurgeschiedenis van radio en televisie in Nederland*, ed. Bert Hoge Kamp, Sonja de Leeuw & Huub Wijffjes (Hilversum: Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid, 2013), 75, 80-86; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 90; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 300-303.

57 Wijffjes, "Radiogemeenschappen," 75; Huub Wijffjes, *Radio onder restrictie. Overheidsbemoeiing met radioprogramma's 1919-1941* (Amsterdam: Stichting Beheer IISG, 1988), 224; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 46, 90-92.

58 Knut Hickethier, "Early TV. Imagining and Realising Television," in *A European Television History*, ed. Jonathan Bignell & Andreas Fickers (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 109-127.

59 Hickethier, "Early TV," 127.

60 These numbers do not match with the numbers Raymond Kuhn gives. He states that in 1958 33% of the British households had a television set, cf. Kuhn, *Media in France*, 110.

61 Kuhn, *Media in France*, 110; Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 156.

62 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 178; Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 156-158; Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 66-70, 85-90.



which made it less appealing for the advertisers to focus their attention on this group.<sup>63</sup>

In the Netherlands and France research has shown that this new medium rose more gradually as television sets remained expensive and were considered to be a somewhat superfluous, needlessly luxurious and somewhat vulgar purchase.<sup>64</sup> Compared to Britain the diffusion of television sets was very low. In 1958 6% of the French households owned a television (3 out of every 1000 inhabitants in 1955), which had grown to 25% by 1963 (41 out of every 1000 inhabitants in 1960). Yet, in the following decade the television really started to invade the homes of the French homes.<sup>65</sup> The same goes for the Netherlands. In 1955 less than 1% of the households had a television set, which number had grown to 20% by 1960. From that moment on, the pace with which televisions were spread over the Dutch households went up (50% of the households in 1964 and 80% in 1968), which coincided with and was reinforced by the depillarization of Dutch society.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, like radio, television was organized in a public broadcasting system and commercial television was prohibited until the 1980s when respectively *RTL Véronique* and *Canal Plus* ushered in a new era. Still, when the public channels were allowed to broadcast commercials at the end of 1960s this meant competition for the dailies - even though in the Netherlands the press was financially compensated for their loss of advertisement revenue, and in France the amount and nature of advertisement was curtailed in order to protect the financial viability of the press.<sup>67</sup>

Thus, the development discussed above meant that from roughly the 1960s onwards, the dailies not only needed to deal with new technological developments and profile themselves vis-à-vis their competition on the newspaper market, but they also had to keep track of the developments with regard to radio and more importantly television. As research suggests, the successful dailies in all three countries were able to find the right mix between journalistic innovation and professionalism, heeding the wishes of their particular target audience, and the right degree of commercial rationalization.<sup>68</sup>

My results show that especially the French dailies grew rapidly in size compared to their prewar equivalents. In spite of the state interference they seemed to have adapted themselves as good as possible to the new commercial demands, which the British and to a lesser extent the Dutch press had already grown accustomed to before the war. Around 1965, with the exception of *La Croix*, the size of the dailies during a week ranged roughly between 15 and 30 pages based on the results of the content analysis.

<sup>63</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 181.

<sup>64</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 318-319; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 109-113.

<sup>65</sup> Kuhn, *Media in France*, 110.

<sup>66</sup> Jan Bank, "Televisie in de jaren zestig," in *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 101, no.1 (1986): 55-57.

<sup>67</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 317-332; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 332-334; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 128-130.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 311; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 262-263.

Table 8a

Newspaper title	Year	Minimum number of pages	Maximum number of pages	Average number of pages
<i>The Times</i>	1925	20	52	27
	1965	16	28	21
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	1925	16	24	20
	1965	24	32	28
<i>Daily Mail</i>	1925	12	16	15
	1965	14	20	16
<i>Algemeen Handelsblad</i>	1925	12	18	16
	1965	12	28	20
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	1925	8	16	15
	1965	16	44	27
<i>De Maasbode</i>	1925	12	16	14
<i>de Volkskrant</i>	1965	12	36	20
<i>Le Figaro</i>	1925	6	10	7
	1965	12	32	24
<i>Le Petit Parisien</i>	1925	6	8	7
<i>France-Soir</i>	1965	10	25	17
<i>La Croix</i>	1925	6	6	6
	1965	6	10	8

The sample also shows that the size of the dailies during the week fluctuated stronger than before. Such daily size variations support claims in previous research about the increasing departmentalization and growing number of supplements of the papers, attuned to the readers' interests and their working rhythm. The content was clustered more and more according to encompassing themes, like domestic and foreign news, but also economic and financial news, culture and sports - in some cases a department was also organized by genre focus, like in the commentary section some dailies have.<sup>69</sup> Especially the increase in size of the Saturday edition was eye-catching within my results. It is likely they were anticipating the extra time readers could spend on reading the paper that day by adding additional sections. Still, supplements were also added on certain week days, like a large sports section on Mondays. Through smart departmentalization and the addition of an increasing number of interesting weekly supplements the dailies could satisfy the readers' demands. Moreover, scholars have pointed out that it provided a way to attract and facilitate the interest of advertisers, who could target a specific audience more easily.<sup>70</sup>

Press historians have established that the popular dailies in the three countries were doing especially well commercially in the first two decades after the war, which is also reflected in general growth of the advertisement I will discuss below. The circulation of the *Daily Mirror* grew considerably after the war to more than 5 million copies a day. In France and the Netherlands the popular dailies sharpened their profile, which appeared to have the intended effect. *France-Soir* had a circulation of

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 188.

<sup>70</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 260-261, 333; Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 215-219.

over a million in the 1950s.<sup>71</sup> In the Netherlands *De Telegraaf* became the clear market leader with a rise from approximately 100,000 copies in the early 1950s to almost half a million by 1970.<sup>72</sup>

Only from roughly the 1970s onward did several of these popular dailies experience some commercial decline. With the rise of *The Sun* in Britain, which took the popular logic to the next level, in combination with the growing dominance of the television, the *Mirror* and the *Mail* had some difficulties commercially. It could be that the decline of the *Mail* already announced itself in 1965 as the results show that it was the only daily with a declining amount of advertisement. This could be partially explained by its status as mid-market daily that Williams has pointed to. Consequently, that meant that it was on the 'serious' side of the popular segment with a fairly affluent audience, that were avid television viewers. The advertisers therefore started to move their attention to the television, which they believed could reach their audience in a much better way.<sup>73</sup>

Due to the comparatively late rise of television and the much more restricted role advertisement had played, press historians have argued that the popular dailies in France and the Netherlands did not feel much competition from that side with regard to advertisement throughout the 1960s.<sup>74</sup> The following decade however this would change. Still, the circulation of *France-Soir* started to diminish rapidly from the end of the 1960s onwards and withered away in the following decades. In spite of the gradual advance of television in France, the decline of the popular press has been connected to the rise of this new medium. According to Martin and Eveno, it cut the grass from under the feet of the popular dailies. Television's visual appeal, its focus on entertainment, and its vivid coverage made the format of the popular daily, in which pictures, sports and human interest played a central role, to a certain extent obsolete.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, Raymond Kuhn argued that the influence of television alone cannot offer a fully satisfying explanation for the decline of the daily press already set in before television had really come into its own. In his opinion reasons for the decline also reside in the commercially uninviting structure of the state controlled press landscape and in the inhibitions of journalists to fully exploit the popular logic on the discursive level, which I will discuss later on.<sup>76</sup>

As graphs 8.1 & 8.2 suggest, the serious dailies could not match the expansion of the popular press, but most of the dailies managed to maintain a steady or even growing circulation and in particular *Le Figaro* and *de Volkskrant* attracted a lot of advertisement.<sup>77</sup> However, as the production costs were rising and large investments in technology were necessary, the quality dailies had a hard time to hold their own financially. Like before the war *The Times* remained an unprofitable endeavor, which the strong decline of the amount of advertisement attests to. Although the circulation rose somewhat in the 1960s under the new ownership of Canadian Roy Thomson, the growing overhead counterbalanced this financial improvement.<sup>78</sup> *Algemeen Handelsblad* had similar problems. As Van der Hoeven has established, the daily was not very profitable anymore. To improve its financial position, the daily was therefore assiduously looking for cost reductions by sharing the overhead costs with other dailies. This search resulted in cooperation with the *Nieuw Rotterdamsche Courant* (NRC) and finally a full-fledged merger of both papers in 1970.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 315.

<sup>72</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 568-569; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 331.

<sup>73</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 178-185.

<sup>74</sup> Kuhn, *Media in France*, 109; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 319.

<sup>75</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 312-315; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 166.

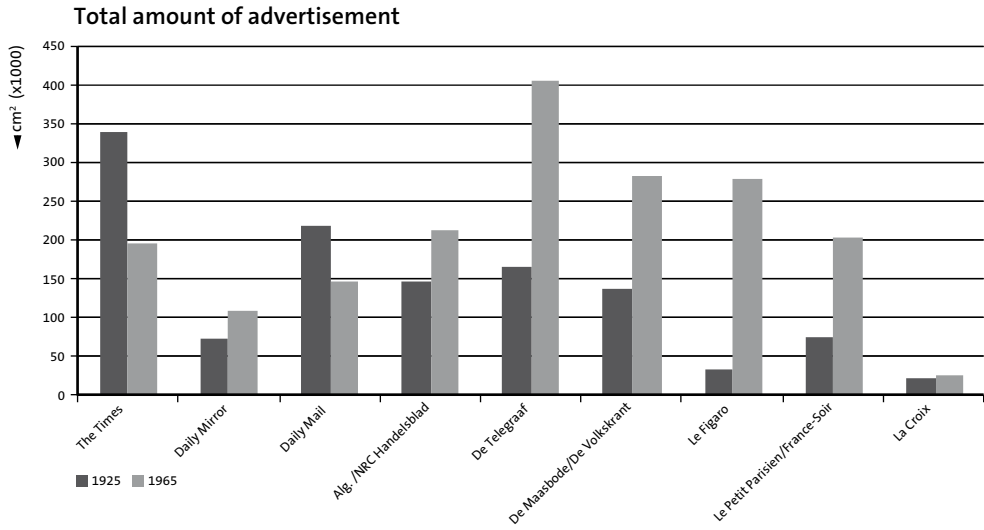
<sup>76</sup> Kuhn, *Media in France*, 32-33, 45-47.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 189; Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 28-29; Pien van der Hoeven, *Het succes van een kwaliteitskrant. De ontstaansgeschiedenis van NRC Handelsblad* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2012), 255-256.

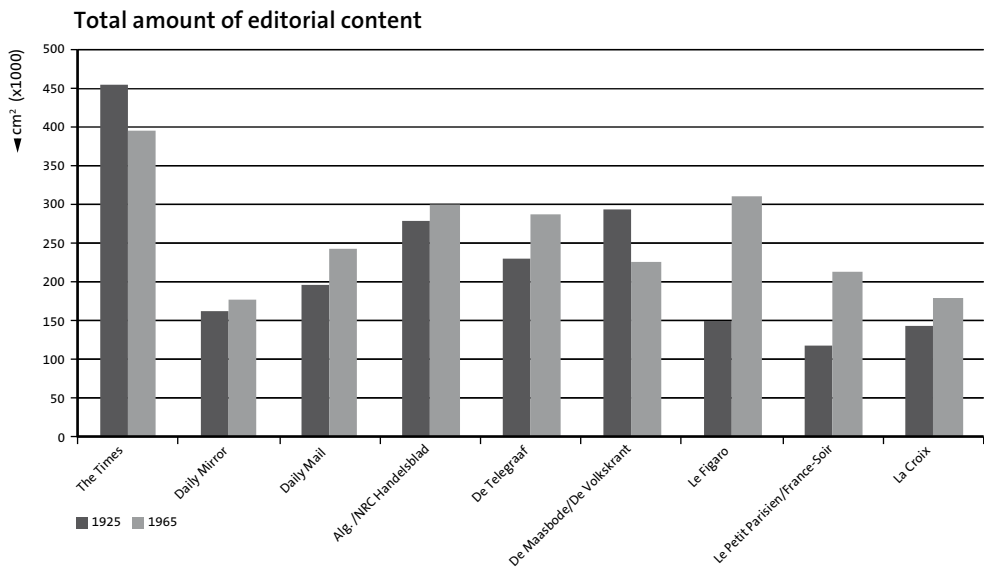
<sup>78</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 189.

<sup>79</sup> Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 19, 59-63, 107-134.

Graph 8.1



Graph 8.2



The growing costs had a strong effect on the serious dailies. Press historians have illustrated how on an institutional level the management of the dailies was exploring to what extent they could cooperate with other dailies to reduce the overhead costs. Yet, at the same time they have pointed out that on the discursive level the dailies competed with each other for circulation and subsequently advertisement. In Britain, *The Times* had to compete with old and new contenders, like *The Guardian* and the *Financial Telegraph*. In the Netherlands, with its more condensed press landscape, *Algemeen Handelsblad* competed with *NRC* on the one side and *De Telegraaf* on the other. A move to either side resulted in a loss of readership on the other. With the depillarization in the 1960s, *de Volkskrant*,

which was successfully reinventing itself in that period and abandoned its Catholic ideology, also attracted a share of the readership. Van der Hoeven's analysis suggests that *Algemeen Handelsblad* fell into the void between the conservative and intellectually esteemed journalism practice of *NRC* and the more popular journalism of *De Telegraaf* and later on *de Volkskrant*.<sup>80</sup>

In comparison, research into the quality press in France points to its relatively strong position. Although the popular dailies still dominated the newspaper business in the 1950s and 1960s, the serious dailies, like *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde* also created both commercially and journalistically a strong position for themselves, which is reflected in the considerable increase of the amount of advertisement in *Le Figaro*. Their target audience was considered to have the most financial potential and between 1965 and 1975 advertisement revenues accounted for roughly 80% of the paper's income.<sup>81</sup> Throughout the 1970s, when the popular papers started losing their leading position, the circulation of the serious dailies could compete with that of the popular dailies.<sup>82</sup>

Thus, the return of the competition between dailies in the 1960s and the rising production costs created a strongly commercialized climate that manifested itself in the rationalization of the business side of the newspaper. In tandem with these changes dailies needed to adapt their journalistic practice as well. The existing scholarship suggests a media landscape in which newspapers needed to sail close to the wind by carving out a clear journalistic profile that fitted their target audience and standing out from the competition in order to stay in business. In this process balancing quality standards with the appeal to a large audience needed to be fine-tuned better than ever before. Support for this claim can be found in the increasing use the dailies made of surveys that gauged the wishes and needs of the readership.<sup>83</sup> To a certain extent the struggles of individual dailies, like the popular *Daily Mail* and *France-Soir*, but also *The Times* and *Algemeen Handelsblad* can be explained by the difficulties they had in crystallizing a clear journalistic profile under influence of the changing circumstances after the war.<sup>84</sup>

## Uniformization of the lay-out

With regard to lay-out and structure, the renewed competition in the postwar period was accompanied by an increasing uniformization that exceeded the national context. This manifested itself clearly in the visual appearance of the dailies (see front pages on pages 208-224). The financial pressure on the newspaper business left no room for large divergences with regard to the lay-out of the dailies. Research arguing that ideas about how the news should be presented visually became more alike, finds support in my analysis.<sup>85</sup>

The dailies were structured more clearly according to news value than before the war and the growing amount of editorial content in combination with the advertisement opportunities, which I have already discussed, resulted in a stronger departmentalization by topic. More than ever before, the front page determined the image of a newspaper. Bold headlines, news leads, subheadings and streamers guided the reader to the most important news of the day and where to find it in the following pages. The initial anxiety about the danger of an overly sensational appearance was generally gone, although the differences between the lay-out of the serious and the popular dailies

<sup>80</sup> Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 61-65, 189, 350-353.

<sup>81</sup> Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 158-159.

<sup>82</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 312-315; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 32.

<sup>83</sup> Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 311; Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 189; Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 217.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 59-65; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 166; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 189, 203.

<sup>85</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 263; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 193.

still showed the different standards in this respect. The popular dailies certainly exploited the visual cues more profusely in a much more exuberant way, whereas the serious dailies had a more austere appearance. The difference in standards becomes immediately apparent by looking at the front pages of the nine dailies.<sup>86</sup> *The Times* had the most sober lay-out and was the most hesitant when it came to such visual strategies; it took until 3 May 1966 before the daily finally adopted a front page with editorial content.<sup>87</sup>

Above all other visual cues, my analysis points to the striking increase of the prominence of pictures within the dailies. This offers support for the claims of existing scholarship that after the Second World War photojournalism had developed into a professional occupation with its own awards.<sup>88</sup> Novel photographic technology, like the invention of the flash bulb and increasingly manageable cameras improved the quality of the pictures and made it possible to make pictures under more challenging circumstances. This development set in around the 1930s, but within the daily press, especially the serious dailies, such practices raised suspicion about the taste and decency of such pictures. Only after the war did the dailies therefore really benefit from the technological developments of photojournalism.<sup>89</sup> As the dailies warmed up to photojournalism, photographs became less restricted to static pictures of people or scenery and testified to more spontaneity and immediacy.<sup>90</sup>

By 1965 pictures had flooded the ranks of the daily. In certain cases, as I will show in the next chapter, the pictures almost entirely replaced the journalistic text pointing to the prominence of the visual. Only the *Mirror* saw a minor decrease in the share that was filled with pictures, but this was most likely the result of its newly adopted profile of a more all-round daily that did not advertise as a picture paper anymore. As scholars have argued, this strong increase can partly be attributed to the growing influence of the television, but already before the war the appeal of pictures had been firmly established. The television merely acted as a further catalyst. To be able to compete with television the dailies were almost compelled to focus more on the visual aspects of the newspaper. By adapting to the visual logic of the television dailies hoped to be able to compete better with this new appealing medium.<sup>91</sup> Especially the popular dailies, which targeted a similar audience as the television broadcasters, started to support their editorial content much more with pictures.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, my analysis shows that serious dailies, like *de Volkskrant* and *Le Figaro*, devoted almost the same share of the paper to pictures. This shows that some serious papers also embraced the focus on the visual, which reinforced the fading suspicion against pictures per se.

Yet, my analysis suggests that the serious dailies that were more prone to photographic content still diverged from their popular counterparts (Graph 8.3). The differences that exist between the types of photos dailies integrated, link up to the differences between news and background, and hard news and soft news. By 1965 the quality dailies devoted around 50% of the pictorial space to news photos. *Le Figaro* discords with this image, and focuses more on pictures that capture the atmosphere of an event. Popular dailies display a much stronger emphasis on portraits, which indirectly supports the idea that they focus more on human interest. This offers some support for the idea that popular

86 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 192-194, 200-202; Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 187-190; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 261, 333-334; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 381.

87 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 189.

88 Langton, *Photojournalism*, 32; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 375; Bernadette Kester, "Onder vuur. Het ontstaan van de Nederlandse fotojournalistiek," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et al. (Amsterdam: AUP, 2002), 250, 254.

89 Kester, "Onder vuur," 254; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 163-166, 315-317.

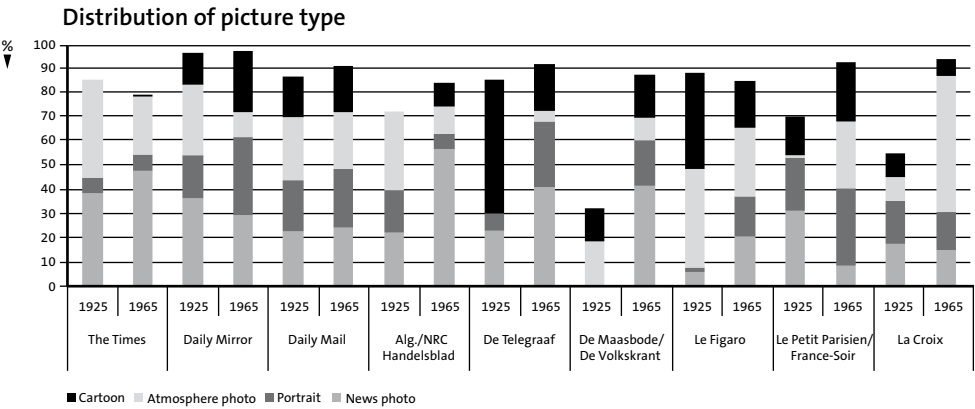
90 Langton, *Photojournalism*, 28-30; Becker, "Photojournalism," 13.

91 Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 189-192; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 315-316; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 369.

92 Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 221; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 371-372; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 333.

dailies centered their attention on entertaining their readers by covering ‘soft’ news, in which the pictures of celebrities also played an important role.<sup>93</sup> It is certainly not a perfect fit though and the tentative conclusions need more research to be substantiated thoroughly.

Graph 8.3



### Entertaining or informing

Next to the visual appearance of the dailies, my analysis suggests that the introduction of television also seems to have had certain repercussions for the way dailies profiled themselves in their editorial content. Especially throughout the 1960s the popular and serious dailies needed to position themselves; not only vis-à-vis each other, but also towards the growing dominance of the television. As I have already discussed, television was a marginal medium at the start of the 1950s with only a small group of people owning a television set. Another factor that scholars have put forward as a reason for the rather slow start was the hesitant attitude of the state, a large part of the journalists and the public. As television had rapidly developed into a mass medium in America, many journalists and large parts of the public in the Netherlands came to associate this medium with this country and they subsequently saw it as representative for the superficial characteristics of American consumer culture. The debate about television therefore echoes earlier discussions about new journalism and the introduction of photographs, which also expressed anxiety with regard to the negative consequences of ‘Americanization’. The focus on the visual in combination with the initial emphasis on entertainment programs aimed at the middle class, led to anxiety about the effects of television on society. Politicians, print journalists, and even television journalists themselves expressed concerns about the possible threats television could pose. Like photographs, the strong emphasis on the visual was considered to compromise the intellectual capacity of the new medium; the focus was too much on direct emotionality. Moreover, the strong focus on entertainment programs made that television was feared to lead to ‘cultural debasement’ in general. As Dutch politician Jo Cals put it:

93 Becker, “Photojournalism,” 141-142.

After the mass-labor it is now the mass-recreation that besets the human personality and which threatens to replace its own activity and initiative, such effort in the mental and cultural sphere, with passivity and grey superficiality.<sup>94</sup>

For that reason the governments in the three countries kept television broadcast in check with regulations that determined what could and what should be aired.<sup>95</sup>

As a result, television journalism was also regarded with suspicion. Especially the daily press was highly critical of the new information medium, which had the potential of bringing the news faster than ever with multiple news shows that were broadcasted during the day and the first experiments with live coverage.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, scholars have emphasized the visual appeal of the medium as the main reason why television became a force to reckon with. In the 1960s television journalism came into its own with a growing number of journalists to gather and bring the news and the development of its own particular discursive forms, distinguishing the medium from cinema and radio. In this period television started living up to its competitive potential, but the impact of the introduction of television on the debate about journalism thus manifested itself already from the 1950s onward.<sup>97</sup> The swelling anxiety about television's role in journalism and society fostered the feeling that responsible and sound journalism was being threatened. The critical responses to television reinforced the heated discussion about the commercialization and trivialization of journalism, which had been rekindled by the aforementioned rationalization of the newspaper business. Ultimately, the quality and pluriformity of journalism were at stake in this debate.<sup>98</sup>

This discussion, which is intricately related with the professionalization of journalism that I will discuss in the following section, contributed to the crystallization of the opposition between the serious and the popular press. In the period before the war, the serious press referred to the dailies that targeted a societal elite. However, in the Netherlands, France, and, to a lesser extent, in Great Britain, the term did not make a distinction between papers of record focusing on factual news and reflective or partisan papers with their emphasis on views. The previous chapters indicate that the distinction between these types of papers was often hard to make. After the war this was changing and after the 1950s reflective journalism was more or less sidetracked in the sense that it did no longer play a role in the debate about journalistic quality. As Van der Hoeven argues, the quality standards were much more narrowly delineated and became more fully equated with a particular journalism practice rather than only referring to a specific elite target audience adhering to a certain ideology.<sup>99</sup> For that reason I will from here on in this dissertation use the term 'quality press' instead of 'serious press' to signal this change. Because of this development popular and quality dailies both championed an event-centered journalism practice and displayed a stronger uniformity in their outlook on journalism practice. Subsequently, this intensified the competition between the different

94 Jo Cals cited in: Andreas Fickers, "Op zoek naar televisie 1925-1960," in *Een eeuw van beeld en geluid. Cultuurgeschiedenis van radio en televisie in Nederland*, ed. Bert Hogeboom, Sonja de Leeuw & Huub Wijffjes (Hilversum: Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid, 2012), 127.

95 Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 151-152, 164-170; Fickers, "Op zoek naar televisie," 125-131, 136; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 318-326; Huub Wijffjes, *Uit de ban van goede en slechte smaak. Perspectieven in televisiegeschiedenis* (Amsterdam: Vossiuspers UvA, 2010), 9-13; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 119-122, 130-133.

96 Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 321-323; Sonja de Leeuw, "Televisie verbindt en verdeelt, 1960-1985," in *Een eeuw van beeld en geluid. Cultuurgeschiedenis van radio en televisie in Nederland*, ed. Bert Hogeboom, Sonja de Leeuw & Huub Wijffjes (Hilversum: Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid, 2012), 156-159.

97 Fickers, "Op zoek naar televisie 1925-1960," 125-131; Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 151-152, 164-165; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 318-326.

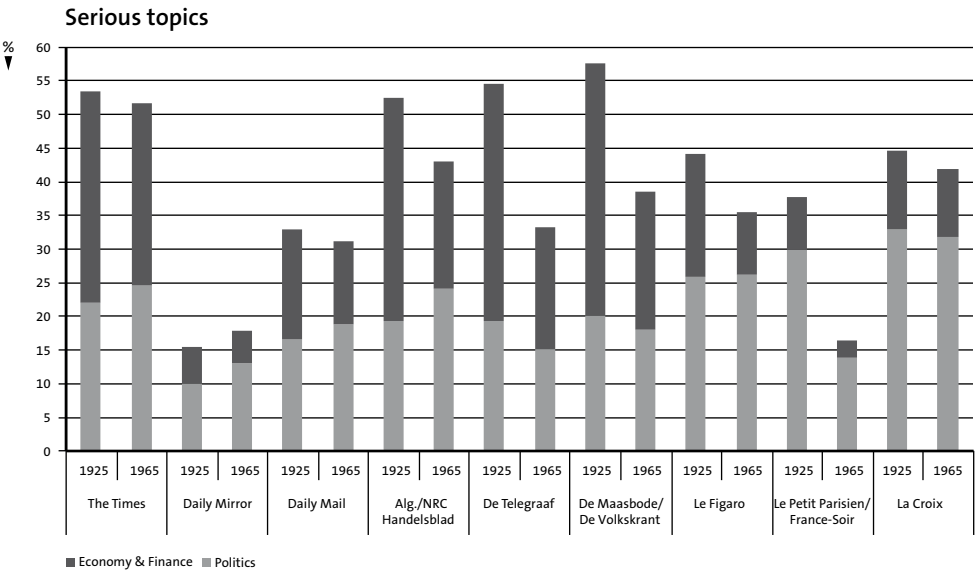
98 Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 330-331; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 193-194; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 313-315.

99 Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 24-25; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 342; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 145-146; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 72-73; cf. Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 179.



types of dailies, which was reinforced by the growing commercial pressures in the 1960s. This claim is reinforced by my analysis, showing that particularly in France and the Netherlands the topical orientation of the popular dailies and their quality counterparts diverged considerably after the war (Graphs 8.4 & 8.5). Most striking is the clear break of *France-Soir* with the persisting strong focus on politics of popular journalism in France in the years before the war. Whereas *Le Petit Parisien* still devoted almost 30% of its editorial space to politics, *France-Soir* devoted less than half to this topic.<sup>100</sup> Although the popular profile of *De Telegraaf* became stronger and closer to the other popular dailies, the paper displays a moderate decline in its attention to politics. Still, the difference with *Algemeen Handelsblad* got bigger as the latter increased its attention to politics.<sup>101</sup> It also shows a strong decline in the attention to economy and financial news, but this also manifested itself in the quality dailies, and can be attributed to the fact that the space devoted to stock exchange numbers was compressed considerably.<sup>102</sup>

Graph 8.4



Conversely, the results show that in Britain the status quo between the dailies was maintained, which can be explained by the earlier separation of the popular and serious press in this respect. The latter kept on devoting an important part of their attention to politics, and also to economics and finance. The popular dailies clearly devoted less attention to serious topics. However, as the popular dailies even increased the attention for politics slightly, the results refute or at least nuance conclusions of previous research into this issue that argue that the attention for politics declined in the British popular press in the decades after the war.<sup>103</sup> The *Daily Mail* for instance resembles *de Volkskrant* in its share of political coverage and thus still devoted quite some space to politics for a daily that is considered to have a popular rationale. It is also in line with the postwar transformation

<sup>100</sup> Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 165-166.

<sup>101</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 369.

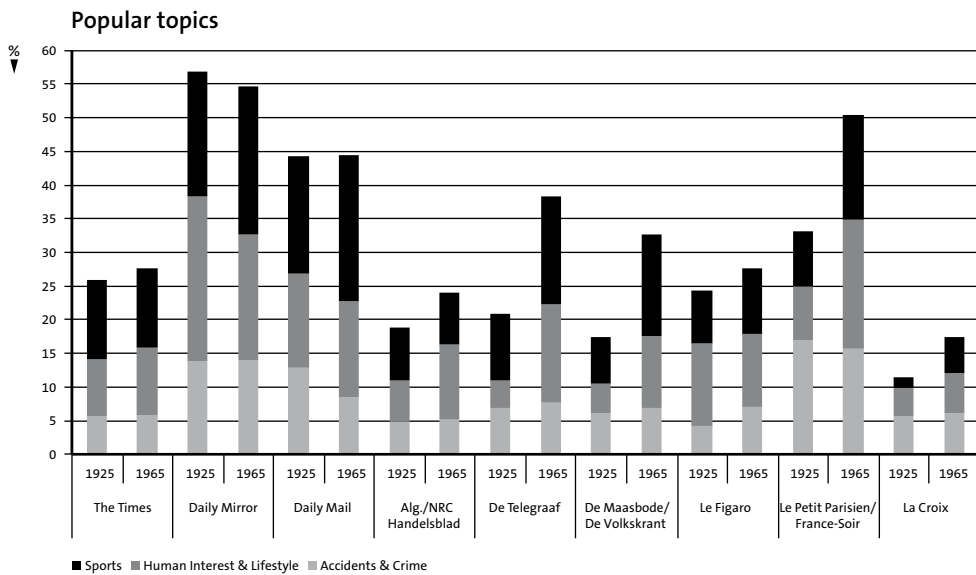
<sup>102</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 260.

<sup>103</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 193-194.

into a general news-oriented popular daily.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, in all countries the differences between quality and popular dailies with regard to these serious topics remained considerable - although they manifested on a smaller scale in the Dutch press.

Another clear distinction is manifested in the attention the two types of dailies devoted to sports, human interest & lifestyle and accidents & crime. The content analysis shows for instance that the Dutch and French popular dailies almost doubled the part of the editorial space they devoted to sports. It had also become an established journalistic topic in the quality papers, but with the exception of *de Volkskrant* it was not treated as a unique selling point.

Graph 8.5



Finally, the popular dailies distinguished themselves in their focus on human interest. Especially the popular dailies in France and the Netherlands focused on human aspects of the news to appeal to a large audience and to gain ground in the postwar period.<sup>105</sup> Several scholars have pointed to the role television played in this development as well. According to them, it contributed to a celebrity culture only by showing the faces of certain people on a regular basis. Moreover, television's focus on personality with the rise of the talk show and the focus on an immediate experience, in which and footage of the accompanying responses and emotions of the people involved played a central role as well as the budding forms of live coverage.<sup>106</sup> For instance, in the first years of the 1960s, *De Telegraaf*, inspired by the growing popularity of television, started to publish at least one page specifically focused on celebrity journalism, for which they looked to the experts in human interest coverage: the British popular dailies.<sup>107</sup> These British papers indeed had more experience in this field of journalism and the increased focus on human interest had manifested earlier in the British dailies.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 182-187.

<sup>105</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 333-334; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 307.

<sup>106</sup> De Leeuw, "Televisie verbindt," 156-159; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 325-326; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 371-373; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 242; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 46; Rojek, *Celebrity*, 13-16.

<sup>107</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 373.

Although human interest in the *Mirror* had declined somewhat by 1965, the graph shows that in 1965 the popular dailies devote between approximately 15% and 20% of their editorial space to human interest, whereas the other dailies circle around 10%. Again, this does not mean that nothing changed in the nature of the coverage. Williams for example has pointed to the changing characteristics of the entertainment elements in the popular dailies, which became more focused on sex for instance - embodied in the rise of the topless 'page three girl' that *The Sun* introduced in 1967.<sup>108</sup>

These results reinforce the idea that especially in France and the Netherlands the opposition between quality and popular dailies only came into its own after the Second World War, whereas in Britain this opposition already manifested itself before the Second World War and only showed developments in the nature of the content rather than in its amount.<sup>109</sup> In general, these differences between the popular and quality press fit in with a broader process of professionalization, in which journalistic quality came to be defined more clearly.

## Professionalization

Of course, the notion of journalistic quality was also underlying the opposition between the popular and quality press in the prewar period, but it was less described in terms of journalistic professionalism that determined journalism practice.<sup>110</sup> Press historians in all three countries have demonstrated how in the postwar period the quality standards came to be delineated more narrowly by connecting the civic duty of the press to an objective journalism practice. Throughout the 1960s quality was definitively conceived as representing the public rather than educating it.<sup>111</sup>

In Britain the development towards this professional framework built on the developments before the war and did not go against tradition to the same extent as it did in the Netherlands and France. Nevertheless, as research has established, the aftermath of the state control during and shortly after the war in combination with the increasing press concentration put independence and pluriformity high on the agenda again. In 1949 a royal commission researched this issue, and came with several noncommittal recommendations to safeguard the civic role the press played in society.<sup>112</sup> As I will argue in the following section the renewed competition between the quality and popular dailies also played an important role in the development towards more clearly defined professional guidelines.

In the Netherlands and France the emergence of this professional framework meant a clearer break with the pre-war period. It is intricately tied to the gradual abandoning of the political parallelism within the press. The process in which the structure of press landscape gradually moved away from the ideological divisions within the political domain started in the 1950s, but really manifested itself throughout the 1960s. Right after the war the ideological press was revived, but as discussed, these dailies had a hard time dealing with the changing commercial demands and many of them slowly withered away. Thus, in spite of the strong criticism, a commercial foundation of the press became a necessity to keep afloat. According to the existing scholarship, this gave an impulse to the professionalization of journalism as a well-delineated professional framework. Norms such as independence, detachment, and neutrality guided journalism practice and were believed to be a necessary counterweight to the alleged corrupting forces of commercialism in journalism.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 186, 200.

<sup>109</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 159-161, 193-194; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 333-334; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 307, 315.

<sup>110</sup> Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 24-25; cf. Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 179.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 484-487; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 261-264, 341-342;

Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 24-25; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du frou*, 77-78, 123-125, 145-146; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 72-73.

<sup>112</sup> Elliot, "Professional ideology," 180-182, 189-191; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 179-180.

<sup>113</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 261-264; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 70-71; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du frou*, 123-132.

In the Netherlands the professionalization went hand in hand with the broader process of depillarization, in which the bonds between the press and a certain political, social or religious 'pillar' were severed. De Leeuw has pointed to the important role television played in this process. The fact that up until 1964 only one channel was available resulted in people breaking out of their pillar and watching a diversity of programs.<sup>114</sup> Before the depillarization really manifested itself, the social responsibility of the press towards its public had been emphasized and was enforced by most editors-in-chief at the cost of a critical perspective on the - political - Establishment. According to Wijffjes, the widely shared conviction that the restoration of the country would benefit from a stable and moderate societal and political debate reinforced this feeling of responsibility. The fading of the traditional pillars and its societal organization gave an impulse to a journalistic attitude that echoed the ideals of the rising "adversary culture" in the 1960s, which I will discuss more thoroughly in the following chapter. In this broader cultural process journalism adopted a more distant and critical outlook on politics and those in power.<sup>115</sup>

This development in the press is best represented by *de Volkskrant's* removal from the Catholic doctrine. It is a perfect example of the significant move away from a partisan press within the broader process of depillarization within Dutch society of the 1960s. *de Volkskrant* started out in 1919 as a typical reflective Catholic newspaper, but as Van Vree has illustrated in detail the daily slowly abandoned its Catholic profile after the war. Under the guidance of editor-in-chief Joop Lückner, the daily gradually started to give journalistic norms with regard to newsgathering preference over religious considerations and became an innovative daily.<sup>116</sup> Throughout the 1960s the daily really broke free of its specific ideological orientation and became a socially progressive, but first and foremost an independent daily. The paper rejuvenated itself and targeted a relatively young and progressive audience, which - as my results support - was accompanied by a topical orientation in the daily that showed some similarities with the popular press.<sup>117</sup>

In France, the strong connection between politics and journalism that scholars have emphasized had also affected the independent position of journalists and their critical attitude. Like in the Netherlands until the depillarization, there was a relatively strong *connivence* between journalists and politicians. In the postwar period mutually reinforcing changes both in the organization of politics and the press had similar effects on newspaper journalism as in the Netherlands. With the emphasis of the new Gaullist constitution at the end of the 1950s on the position of the president as a leader figure that exceeded party politics together with the growing influence of national television, the population's identification with a specific political party became weaker and less self-evident. Moreover, the commercial circumstance demanded dailies to look beyond ideology to attract a large enough readership. Within this context journalism came to focus more on its independence, which allowed a more critical attitude towards the Establishment on behalf of the population. This also meant that the commentary sections in the dailies no longer attested to a particular ideological perspective, but could accommodate contrasting opinions.<sup>118</sup> In this sense the external pluriformity of the press landscape in France, and that of the Dutch press as well for that matter, was slowly developing towards an internal pluriformity.<sup>119</sup>

These developments subsequently meant that the professional profile of the journalist became

<sup>114</sup> De Leeuw, "Televisie verbindt," 153-154.

<sup>115</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 266-268, 292-294, 335-336.

<sup>116</sup> Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 26-32.

<sup>117</sup> Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 72-87, 116-118.

<sup>118</sup> Kuhn, *Media in France*, 69-76; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 194-198; Ruellan, *Professionnalisme du flou*, 145-148; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 305-311.

<sup>119</sup> Kuhn, *Media in France*, 72-75; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 336-346, 421; cf. Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 41.

more clearly and narrowly outlined. The civic ideals in itself did not really change, but they became more clearly connected to a specific i.e. objective journalism practice. Press histories show that journalism practice in Britain went ahead on the path it had already set foot on in the inter-war period, whereas in France and the Netherlands the changes were more conspicuous. In the latter two the image of the journalist as an artist who was endowed with a specific predisposed talent was fading in favor of the ideal of a trained professional. In all three countries a journalism practice developed that subscribed to the norms of the objectivity regime, such as independence, impartiality and detachment in order to be able to perform their watchdog role in society. They respected this journalism conception by depersonalizing the reporting process and relying on sources to elicit and verify information. As my analysis demonstrates in the following sections, this practice was clearly recognizable in the changing textual characteristics of the journalistic content.<sup>120</sup>

As scholars have pointed out, these changes were reinforced institutionally. Britain and the Netherlands both established a press council as a form of self-regulated safeguarding of the quality standards - although the authority of these institutions was limited in practice.<sup>121</sup> In all three countries the journalistic federations formulated guidelines, which a journalist was supposed to comply with. The professional identity was translated in a more clearly delineated code of conduct.<sup>122</sup> In the Netherlands the professionalization of journalism manifested itself in the constitution of one national - union-like - federation, and in France the national syndicate formulated a much clearer profile as well. Next to that the introduction of the press card in the early 1970s in France also marked the growing self-consciousness and the more practice-oriented delineation of journalism as a profession.<sup>123</sup> In 1968 the journalistic standards were even internationally discussed by the International Federation of Journalist and in 1971 they were officially accepted as a set of international guidelines.<sup>124</sup> These guidelines recognized that journalism was regarded as an occupation for which one needed to acquire skills.

The national federations are also shown to have played an important role in the rise of a better organized journalistic educational system.<sup>125</sup> The road to the constitution of an organized journalistic education was accompanied by many discussions revolving around the questions whether journalism education belonged in a school or university, or if it was something that could be taught altogether. In all three countries the idea that journalism could only be learned through on-the-job training, rather than being taught in the artificial environment of a school was persistent. After the war the opposing perspective on the nature of journalism as an occupation was still subject to debate. Nonetheless, in the 1960s the emphasis on the necessity for a professional journalism in response to the threat of commercialism and political interference led to a new kind of journalistic education. There was a growing focus on journalism practice instead of the earlier emphasis on useful knowledge about politics, international relations, culture and societal issues.<sup>126</sup>

Thus, in the postwar period and most markedly from the 1960s onward the balance tilted towards

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 262-262, 334-335, Williams, *Read All About It!*, 161-162, 192-194; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 145-154.

<sup>121</sup> Elliot, "Professional Ideology," 189-191; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 179-180;

Martin Conboy, *Journalism in Britain. A historical introduction* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2011), 169-170.

<sup>122</sup> Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 168-171; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 372-373; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 76-77, 123-125.

<sup>123</sup> Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 57, 68-77; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 372- 374.

<sup>124</sup> Jean-Marie Charon, "L'éthique des journalistes au xxe siècle. De la responsabilité devant les pairs aux devoirs à l'égard du public," *Le Temps des médias* 1 (2003): 200-210.

<sup>125</sup> Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 171; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 352-353.

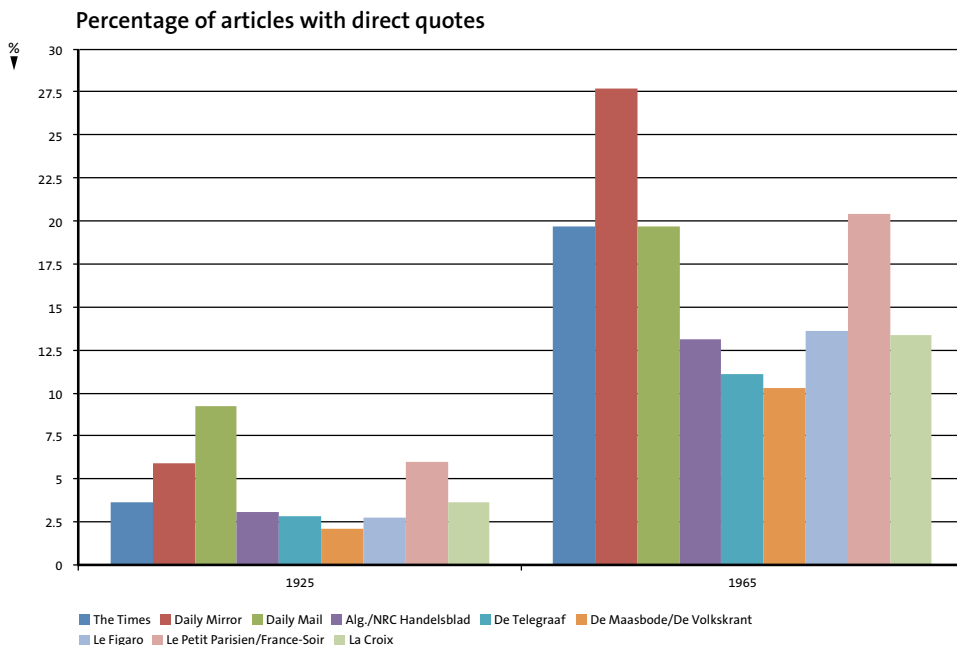
<sup>126</sup> Michael Bromley, "The United Kingdom Journalism Education Landscape," in *European Journalism Education*, ed. George Terzis (Bristol/Chicago: Intellect, 2009), 51-54; Gabriëlla Meerbach, "The Netherlands Journalism Education Landscape," in *European Journalism Education*, ed. George Terzis (Bristol/Chicago: Intellect, 2009), 165-166, 168-170; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 57-60.

the image of a journalist as a trained professional. Consequently, journalism as an occupation became more clearly outlined. This development is also reflected in the institution of journalistic prizes, which were generally awarded to an exemplary journalist by an expert jury of journalistic peers. The journalistic domain thus turned its gaze inwards and became a self-regulating field with their own discursive norms, routines, and forms. Journalism practice developed a more coherent professional framework. In France and the Netherlands, these developments were accompanied by a stronger demarcation from literary discourse.<sup>127</sup>

## Determining quality journalism

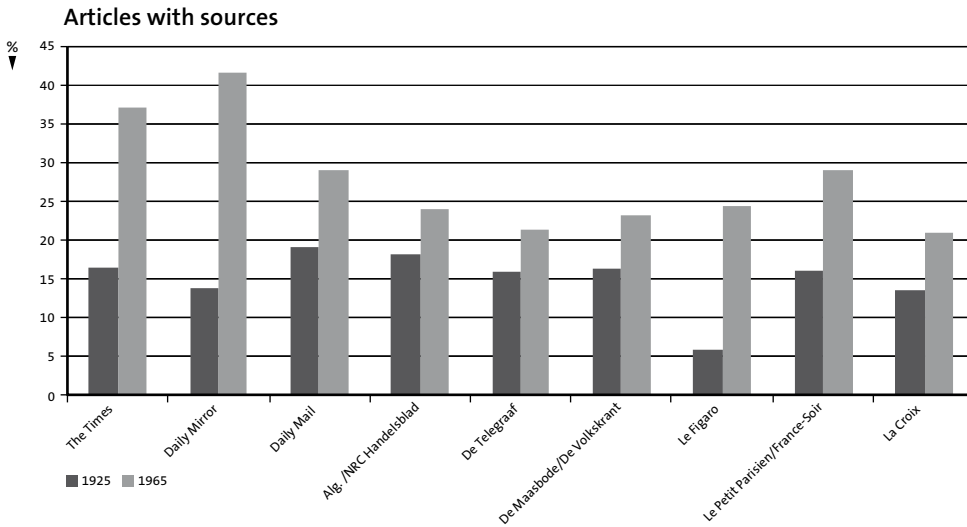
This growing coherence of journalism practice on the level of the norms, routines and texts finds strong support in the analysis of source attribution and the use of direct quotes in the dailies (Graphs 8.6 & 8.7). Moreover, it sheds an interesting light on the way active reporting routines, especially interviewing, experienced a transformation from signaling a cultural debasement to becoming the trademark of quality journalism. Source attribution became more common and direct quotes were widely used. The results show that popular dailies are still somewhat more prone to the use of direct quotes than the quality dailies - *De Telegraaf* being the only exception to the rule. However, the quality dailies had also accepted their use, which was partially a necessary strategy in the competition with the popular dailies.

Graph 8.6



**127** In the Netherlands the 'daily newspaper journalism award' was established in 1965, the British Press Awards in 1970. France was somewhat of an exception, because apart from the *Prix d'Albert Londres*, which was established in the 1930s after Londres tragic death, there were no other awards established.

Graph 8.7



Although a general development towards a more internationally shared journalism practice is clearly discernible, certain national differences remain visible. Direct quotes were seen most in the British dailies, and especially the Dutch dailies still proved to be the most hesitant in this respect. Particularly the fact that the popular daily *De Telegraaf* did not make more use of this textual convention than the quality dailies is remarkable, and points to the enduring uniformity of Dutch journalism discourse. This could be explained by the focus on the social responsibility of the press in the 1950s and early 1960s. Although these ways of presenting news were losing their inherent negative connotation, the association with ‘sensationalism’ was still present. Dutch journalists therefore seem to have been comparatively reserved with regard to the attribution of source and particularly the use of direct quotes.<sup>128</sup>

The analysis of source attribution and especially that of the integration of direct quotes also support the growing uniformity of the different types of dailies in this respect, which has also been acknowledged in previous research.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, within the existing scholarship the development of the popular vis-à-vis the quality press is generally characterized as a polarization process. Press historians have stressed the increasing divergence that manifests particularly in the growing amount of entertainment and human interest in the popular dailies.<sup>130</sup> This focus disregards the fact that in the connection of the outlook on the public role of journalism and the active reporting routines the popular and quality dailies moved closer to each other. In my opinion, it is in part this specific convergence that infused the stronger polarization in the debate on journalism. Throughout the 1960s reflective journalism lost its authority with regard to quality journalism. This does not mean that reflective dailies ceased to exist, but in the debate about journalistic standards they no longer played a significant role. Because the fundamental routines and textual conventions became more alike after the war, the line between respectability and sensationalism was thin. In his research

<sup>128</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 261.

<sup>129</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 263-264; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 193-194.

<sup>130</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 193-194; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 369-373; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 307.

into *de Volkskrant* Van Vree for instance paraphrases historian and regular *Volkskrant* commentator Father Ponsioen, who wrote that journalism by nature had certain sensationalist characteristics:

The journalist discovers the news 'whereas the ordinary people often only observes a normal state of affairs', news that he has to let speak for itself by rousing a certain sensation with the readers. In that sense every daily is partly sensational, says Ponsioen, and there is nothing wrong with that, on the contrary. As long as the value and veracity of the facts is not harmed, a newspaper can appeal to these feelings to get to a transferral of important information and a balanced judgment.<sup>131</sup>

Exactly these fundamental similarities and the narrowing delineation of journalism practice gave rise to a strong struggle over the question what the right journalistic standards exactly entailed.<sup>132</sup>

The intensified debate about journalistic quality standards in this period should be seen within the context of the dailies' loss of credibility during the war and the fierce criticism on the press right after in response to the ongoing commercial rationalization of press concentration and an increased market-orientation. Due to the threats these circumstances posed to the legitimization of their occupation, journalists felt the need to formulate professional standards that could support the legitimization of journalism practice. Unsurprisingly, commercialized popular journalism was portrayed more pointedly as the antithesis of quality journalism in this debate. The quality dailies were trying to set themselves apart from their popular counterparts, and claimed that they were the genuine independent guardians of democracy based on the ways they shaped the active reporting routines.<sup>133</sup>

Scholars have assigned a central role to the notion of sensationalism within this debate. It has been defined as editorial content that is able to "provoke attention or arousal responses" of the audience.<sup>134</sup> It is a notoriously fuzzy concept, which is used to refer to both the topical orientation as well as the way a topic is presented (i.e. genre, lay-out among other characteristics) which can be used to magnify the spectacular, emotional or personal elements of a story. Especially in the contemporary debate on journalism these two sides of the notion were not clearly distinguished. In part this is due to the pejorative way the term was used to reproach the lack of quality of the coverage of popular dailies and allowed the quality press to strategically position itself as their opposite. However, as several theoretical inquiries into this notion have demonstrated, the normative perspective is also point of departure for many scholars who have analyzed forms of sensationalism. Furthermore, it links up to a larger body of research into the dichotomy between information and entertainment, hard news vs. soft news and detachment vs. emotionality.<sup>135</sup>

By calling the popular press sensational, journalists and readers of the quality press criticized their market orientation. In their eyes such a commercial rationale ultimately led to a way of reporting that distorted the more nuanced reality, and subsequently squandered the civic duty by focusing more on entertaining topics and magnifying aspects of a story to appeal to the readers.<sup>136</sup> However, this critique was rejected by the popular journalists, who rather saw sensationalism as a

<sup>131</sup> Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 29.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Sparks, "Popular journalism," 37.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 194, 205.

<sup>134</sup> Paul Hendriks Vettehen, Koos Nuijten & Allerd Peeters, "Explaining Effects of Sensationalism on Liking of Television News Stories. The Role of Emotional Arousal," *Communication Research* 35, no.3 (2008): 320.

<sup>135</sup> For a more detailed definition of the concept, cf. Maria Grabe, Shuhua Zhou & Brooke Barnett, "Explicating Sensationalism in Television News: Content and the Bells and Whistles of Form," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 45, no. 4 (2001): 635-655.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 161, 182-184; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 307; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 369-373, 377-388.



necessary means to connect with the largest part of society, like Sylvester Bolam, editor-in-chief of the *Mirror*, in the early 1950s claimed.

Sensationalism does not mean distorting the truth. It means the vivid and dramatic picture of [sic] presentation of events so as to impact on the mind of the reader. [...] Sensational treatment is the answer, whatever sober and 'superior' readers of some other journals may prefer. No doubt we shall make mistakes, but we are at least alive.<sup>137</sup>

Moreover, Bolam viewed sensationalism also as a positive aspect in performing the civic duty he assigned to the *Mirror*.

The *Mirror* is a sensational paper. We make no apology for that. We believe in the sensational presentation of news and views, especially important news and views, as a necessary and valuable service in these days of mass readership and democratic responsibility.<sup>138</sup>

This perspective of the *Mirror* was shared by the popular dailies in France and the Netherlands. The position of *France-Soir* in this respect has not been scrutinized extensively, but the main characteristics of the daily and its profile that the press histories convey, do suggest a similar journalistic conception.<sup>139</sup> In the case of *De Telegraaf* the similarity is clear. Wolf has shown that the daily profiled itself as a genuine watchdog of democracy, but was also reproached for its sensationalism. Already in the second half of the 1950s, when depillarization was only just budding, the paper positioned itself as the only real independent and critical paper.<sup>140</sup> These dailies thus embraced their popular profile, but not the criticism about squandering their civic duty. They claimed the same professional autonomy as the quality dailies and defended their loyalty to trustworthy reporting, but argued that a somewhat lighter touch was the best strategy to keep the public involved in society as it made the news more accessible rather than inaccurate. From their perspective, sensationalism did not mean superficiality or distortion, but was a necessary strategy to keep the masses informed and involved in democracy.<sup>141</sup> This debate is rooted in a broader context of the opposition of high culture and popular culture, in which the former has generally determined the quality standards.<sup>142</sup>

As my results suggest, event-centered journalism practice was thus broadly accepted after the war and connected to journalism's role of society's watchdog, which represented the voice of the public. Yet, the previous paragraph suggests that the particular way routines had to be employed formed the main issue of the debate about journalistic quality. As I have argued, in the postwar period the quality press fully incorporated the active reporting routines in their quality profile by embracing the objectivity regime. Attributing sources and quoting for instance was legitimized as a sign of their trustworthy and professional status. It was presented as signaling accuracy, impartiality, and detachment as consulting and quoting sources was evidence of the quality journalists' attempt to respectively verify facts, juxtapose contradictory information and divergent views of the people

<sup>137</sup> Sylvester Bolam cited in: Matthew Engel, *Tickle the Public: One hundred years of the popular press* (London: Gollancz, 1996), 179.

<sup>138</sup> Sylvester Bolam cited in: Engel, *Tickle the Public*, 179.

<sup>139</sup> Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 165-166; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 75.

<sup>140</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 377-386.

<sup>141</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 184-188; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 334-335; cf. Shelley McLachlan & Peter Golding, "Tabloidization in the British Press: A Quantitative Investigation into Changes in British Newspapers, 1952-1997," in *Tabloid Tales. Global debates over media standards*, ed. Colin Sparks & John Tulloch (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 75-77; Conboy, Journalism in Britain, 117-124; Jostein Gripsrud, "Tabloidization, Popular Journalism, and Democracy," in *Tabloid Tales. Global debates over media standards*, ed. Colin Sparks & John Tulloch (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 285-289.

<sup>142</sup> Dahlgren, "Introduction," 4-9; Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 8-10.

involved, and did not let their own emotions and convictions play a part in the coverage.<sup>143</sup> In other words, the earlier critique on these 'sensational' elements in the popular press, only serving the purpose of attracting and entertaining readership, was disconnected from the way the quality press, guided by the right set of journalistic norms, employed these routines and forms. This successful strategy was built on the growing status of reporting in the 1930s. It enabled the quality press to adopt the same routines and forms that the popular press had introduced to journalism, but without the critique that had accompanied such a practice earlier. As I will show in the last two chapters, a similar process of incorporation of initially popular features in the quality press can be discerned in the last two decades of journalism history, when elements of 'soft news' are revalued within the framework of quality journalism.

Of course this polarization did not only manifest itself on the level of the debate on journalism, but was intricately related to the level of the practice and the content. The particular legitimization of the quality press of what were fundamentally the same routines and textual conventions finds for instance support in the general disparities in topical orientation that the content analysis conveys; reporting objectively on politics was appreciated in a different way than a similar account on the marriage of a television presenter. I therefore argue that the general topical orientation of the popular dailies already gave the use of the active reporting routines in these dailies a different status. The sensationalism critique can partially be explained by this interaction by using the same routines but within the framework of a different topical focus. This is not to say that there was no difference in the way the routines were employed. Previous research has indicated that the popular press had different standards with regard to the integration of certain story elements, like emotions or personal experiences.<sup>144</sup> On the other hand, the strategic element of this discussion should certainly not be disregarded and the gulf between the popular and the quality press is not absolute.<sup>145</sup>

The results show that a similar disparity can be clearly discerned in the sources the different dailies consulted. The origin and nature of the information in an article is connected to the different preferences of the target public. The popular dailies much more often sought out ordinary people that are in some way directly or indirectly involved in the events, like victims of a crime, eyewitnesses, or the family or friends of a felon. Conversely, *The Times*, *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *Le Figaro* predominantly consulted politicians, and the first two also consulted experts more often than the popular dailies.<sup>146</sup> In the *Daily Mail* the share of politicians actually increased - somewhat surprisingly - at the cost of the 'vox pop' perspective. This points to the mid-market position of the daily, which put it right in between the quality press and the popular dailies focusing more on the lower segment of society. The *Mail* therefore maintained a stronger focus on politics, which seems to have resulted in the consultation of more politicians as interviewing became fully accepted as a routine. *De Volkskrant* conveys middle of the road picture, and given its commercial success seems to have found an appealing profile as a quality daily that integrated several popular newspaper features. This fits with the journalistic transformation process the paper was experiencing.<sup>147</sup>

These differences indicate a divergent perspective on whose voices are important to represent. In line with the existing scholarship, the results suggest that popular dailies needed to relate their news better to the frame of reference of 'everyman'. The success of the *Daily Mirror* for instance in this

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 261-261; Elliot, "Professional ideology," 183-191; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 148-149.

<sup>144</sup> Sparks, "Popular Journalism," 38-41.

<sup>145</sup> Dahlgren, "Introduction," 8, 14-16; Sparks, "Introduction," 10-16, 29-32; McLachlan & Golding, "Tabloidization in the British Press," 75-77, 87-88.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Conboy, *Popular Culture*, 129-133.

<sup>147</sup> Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 12-14.

period is attributed to its capacity to represent the voice of the “ordinary British man and woman”, who wanted a daily that offered entertainment and presented key political and social-economic issues in a way they could relate to it.<sup>148</sup> This also applies generally to *France-Soir* and to *De Telegraaf*, which was called ‘champion of the oppressed’.<sup>149</sup> The quality dailies, focusing on the societal elite, concentrated more on coverage of news that involved the intellectual establishment. Yet, with the increasing competition and economic pressure they too had to deal with the new demands of the public in order to be able to keep their appeal to the public.<sup>150</sup>

## News vs. background stories

The broad adoption of an event-centered journalism practice took place in a period in which the press landscape became a full-fledged media landscape, which led to changes in newspaper content. On the one hand radio and television were evolving and began to form an increasing competition for dailies with regard to the speed of the news coverage and the way it was reported. As mentioned before, dailies had a hard time competing with both the immediacy and visual appeal of news coverage on television. This competition encouraged dailies to adapt their journalistic ‘formula’, focusing more on follow-up stories and background information.<sup>151</sup>

Moreover, as scholars have argued, the stronger emphasis on the dailies’ duty to guard the public interest made them reconsider their core business as a daily. This growing focus on the watchdog role of journalism manifested itself the strongest in the 1960s. It was in part influenced by a ‘critical culture’ or counterculture that emerged in this period, which I will discuss more thoroughly in the following chapter. Both terms refer to a changing perspective on journalism, in which among other things journalists criticized the objectivity regime for resulting in coverage that might have lost its direct partisan nature, but still favored the side of the people in power. They stressed that professional journalistic autonomy also entailed being critical towards the establishment and therefore overtly taking position was revalued. Such an outlook on journalism manifested itself the strongest in certain engaged weekly magazines. Within the newspaper business these ideas echoed in a more subdued manner. They were mainly conceived as the need for a stronger focus on the causes and consequences of the news events and also gave an impulse to integrate more voices from society that were generally left out in the reporting process, rather than taking a clearly argued position.<sup>152</sup> By translating critical culture this way, reporters could incorporate the insight of critical culture within the professional framework of the objectivity regime by maintaining their detachment and impartiality.<sup>153</sup>

Both developments made the dailies focus more on causes, consequences, and the context of news events. Just divulging concisely what had happened, where and when, and who was involved, was no longer enough.<sup>154</sup> This claim finds support in the share of news reports, reporting genres and

<sup>148</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 182-187; Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 110-113.

<sup>149</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 384; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 307.

<sup>150</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 186-188, 192-194; Van der Hoeven, *Kwaliteitskrant*, 240-241, 273-283; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 334-335, 344-346; Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 384; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 45-47.

<sup>151</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 414-417, 429-431; Iverach McDonald, *The History of The Times. Struggles in War and Peace 1939-1966* (London: Times Books, 1984), 450; Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 87-89; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 323-327; De Leeuw, “Televisie verbindt,” 156-159.

<sup>152</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 335-338, 344-346; cf. IJla van den Broek, “Engagement als deugd. Politieke journalistiek tijdens het kabinet-Den Uyl,” in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et al. (Amsterdam: AUP, 2002), 71; Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 146-147, 150.

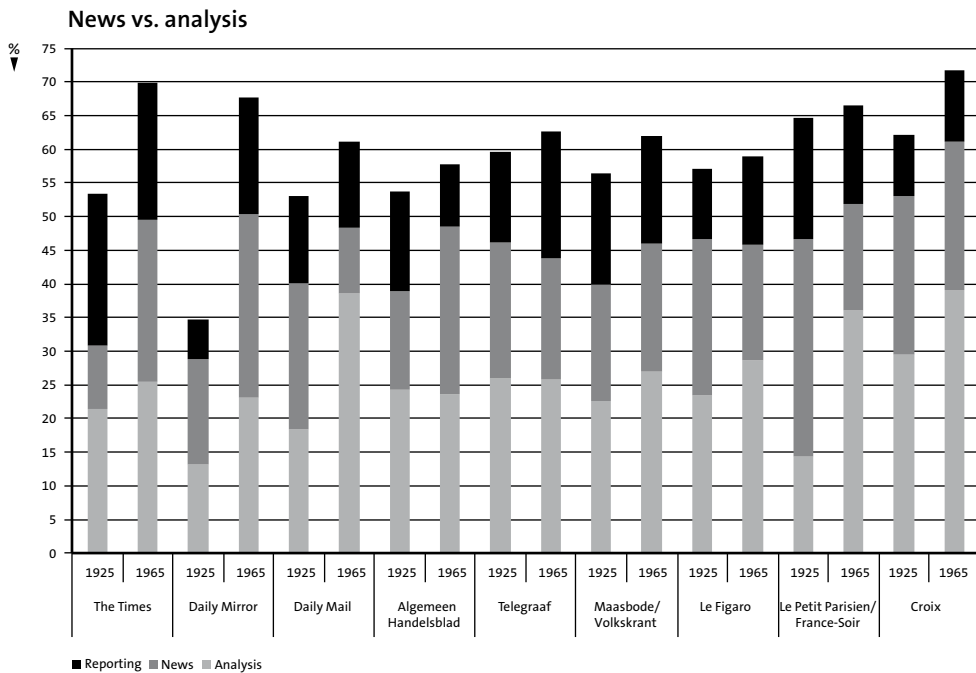
<sup>153</sup> Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 95-99.

<sup>154</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 323-328, 335.

background articles in the different dailies (Graph 8.8). Interestingly, the British and French popular dailies - which before the war advertised their strong focus on news - shifted their emphasis from news reports to background stories. In Britain this shift was especially strong within the ranks of the *Mail*, in which the share of news reports and analyses respectively more than halved and doubled. This can be related to its position between the upper and lower segment of the market. This mid-market position became increasingly hard to maintain throughout the 1960s. The polarization of the quality and popular press made an intermediate position harder to uphold. In addition, these dailies felt the competition of television the strongest. These circumstances could explain the marked shift towards background within the *Daily Mail*, but more research is needed to substantiate this tentative explanation.

Conversely, in the *Mirror* the share of background articles also grew, but this was accompanied by a growing share of the news report and a growing share of the active reporting genres. This development should be seen in the light of the switch from being a picture paper to a general daily. In part the large share of pictures that were published on their specific picture pages now accompanied the articles, which influenced the size of the news report considerably. This transformation can at least partially account for the increase in the share of news report, and it nuances the impression the data gives that the daily showed a growing focus on conveying the news in concise news reports.<sup>155</sup> On the other hand the paper had reinvented itself as a newsy daily for a large working class readership after the war, which is also supported by the strong increase of the reporting genres in the daily.

Graph 8.8



**155** The *Mirror* is for instance the only paper in which the pictures have a strong influence on the average length of the news report.

*De Telegraaf* is once again an exception within the popular press by remaining fairly steady with regard to its share of news and background stories. However, in comparison to *Algemeen Handelsblad*, which increased its share of news reports, *De Telegraaf* appears to have been slightly losing its emphasis on bringing the news events concisely as in turn the share of reporting genres shows a slight increase.

These results suggest a difference in the way popular dailies dealt with the increasing competition from radio and television; the process of remediation thus had different outcomes depending on the type of paper. Broersma has pointed to an opposition in the dailies' strategies with regard to the way they reconceptualized their role within the media landscape. Although Broersma focuses mainly on the visual strategy of the dailies, his distinction points to the choice between taking the competition head-on by adapting to the rationale of the new medium or competing more indirectly by shifting focus and finding a new unique selling point. He shows for instance that some dailies integrated more visual elements to be able to compete with television, whereas other dailies acknowledged the superiority of television in this respect and started to concentrate more on providing the context of the news more in-depth.<sup>156</sup>

With regard to the role of the dailies in presenting the news, the situation seems to be more complex. The data indeed suggests a different emphasis of the quality and popular press in their preference of these strategies. Still, the dailies did not make an 'either-or' choice, but often used elements from both strategies. Taking a closer look at the news report for instance (Table 8b), shows that its growing share in the quality dailies did not necessarily mean that they competed with the television by publishing more news reports than their popular counterparts nor that they published more news reports than before. In part the differences reside mainly in the length of the articles - and in case of the French dailies the strong increase in the number of pages also influences the results. How exactly the changing circumstances within the media landscape affected the dailies seems to differ per daily. Nevertheless, certain main tendencies can be discerned.

With the exception of the *Daily Mail* news reports became longer. This can in part be attributed to the embrace of the active reporting routines. Because of these routines the news reports dealt more extensively with the news events. Sources played an increasingly important role as they were attributed and quoted more often, demanding more space.<sup>157</sup>

As a result, the distinction between news reports, background stories and news analyses became less clear.<sup>158</sup> From that perspective the *Mail's* evident shift to background stories over news reports does point somewhat less to a fundamental difference with regard to the genre focus of the editorial content with *Algemeen Handelsblad* or *The Times* for instance.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 192.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 334-335.

<sup>158</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 334-335; Paul Koedijk, "'Vrijheid in verantwoordelijkheid'. Journalistiek in de jaren vijftig," in *Een stille revolutie?: cultuur en mentaliteit in de lange jaren vijftig*, ed. Paul Luykx & Pim Slot (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1997), 245-246; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 192.

Table 8b

Newspaper title	Year	Number of news reports	Average size of news report	Average number of sources per news report	Percentage of news reports containing direct quotes
<i>The Times</i>	1925	1818	23.22	0.06	0.72
	1965	1753	54.22	0.51	20.65
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	1925	732	34.79	0.24	7.38
	1965	724	66.19	0.64	37.29
<i>Daily Mail</i>	1925	1378	31.05	0.21	7.11
	1965	817	28.96	0.23	13.71
<i>Algemeen Handelsblad</i>	1925	1296	31.36	0.19	1.00
	1965	927	80.11	0.31	11.97
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	1925	1344	34.71	0.15	1.26
	1965	936	55.70	0.21	7.48
<i>De Maasbode</i>	1925	1537	33.15	0.14	0.59
<i>de Volkskrant</i>	1965	680	63.12	0.23	6.62
<i>Le Figaro</i>	1925	1086	32.00	0.04	0.83
	1965	1376	38.83	0.23	10.17
<i>Le Petit Parisien</i>	1925	842	45.33	0.12	2.85
<i>France-Soir</i>	1965	662	51.36	0.19	11.03
<i>La Croix</i>	1925	877	38.45	0.10	1.82
	1965	812	48.58	0.18	11.45

However, the results do indicate that the quality press seems to have maintained their focus on bringing the main news events longer than the popular dailies. In that sense they kept competing with the other news media. This might partially be explained by the different way in which the competition of television affected the popular and the quality press. Television targeted a similar audience as the popular dailies, whereas the readers of the quality press were less avid television viewers. Moreover, television news was said to have a similar sensational way of reporting as the popular dailies, whereas their quality counterparts showed more differences.<sup>159</sup> For these reasons the latter was better equipped to keep up the competition with television with regard to divulging the news in this period. This difference reinforced the polarization of the quality and the popular press. The shift towards background stories combined with their stronger focus on entertaining topics, like human interest, lifestyle and sports contributed to the rise to the idea that popular dailies squandered their civic responsibility.

<sup>159</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 333-335; Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 216-217; Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 87-88; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 307, 315.

## The rise of the interview and the reshaping of the reportage

Taking a closer look at the role and characteristics of the reporting genres in the dailies supports the claim that the active reporting routines manifested themselves more broadly now (Graph 8.9). In most dailies the interview and the reportage gained some more prominence, whereas the report generally lost ground but kept to be seen as a useful form to give a detached description of an account. Especially within *The Times* it maintained a prominent genre. The increase of the report within the *Mirror* is more surprising and reinforces the idea that this paper kept its orientation on the daily news events longer than other popular dailies, like the *Mail* for instance. However, previous research suggests that the genre dropped its minute-like character and subsequent chronologic structure. Instead, it was organized more according to the inverted pyramid or 'relevance principle', in which the most important information was divulged first; a prominent characteristic of the objectivity regime. Thus, to a certain extent the genre was modernized to meet demands of the new circumstances.<sup>160</sup>

Objectivity, in connection to the civic duty of the press, also shaped the interview and reportage. The first decades after the war show the gradual rise of the interview as an accepted way of eliciting information. The popular dailies exploited this genre slightly more in this period. Still, the quality dailies were not far behind. Only *The Times* shows a real reluctance to publish interviews. The reticent *Times* was more or less the last bastion that saw interviewing as improper conduct. The fact that most dailies, quality and popular alike, started to employ this genre points to the rising status of the journalist that accompanied the growing professional status of journalism in the postwar period. Previous research has shown that journalists had acquired enough cultural authority to openly question people about certain issues or about their lives, which links up to the stronger focus on adopting a critical attitude than before. As scholars have argued, the prewar reference for politicians for example was fading and they were approached on more equal terms by reporters.<sup>161</sup> On the other hand it is likely that the people in power had gradually become used to their status as public figures and the subsequent attention from the press. They also saw the opportunity or need to convey their views in the press. However, as the difference in status between these public figures and journalists was fading, the interview also became more of a struggle for information between the interviewer and the interviewee, which is connected to the stronger focus on adopting a critical attitude than before.<sup>162</sup>

In that respect the results of the content analysis suggest tentatively that the interview was focused somewhat differently by the quality and the popular dailies. The popular dailies mainly exploited the interview in order to focus on entertaining topics, like sports or to convey the human angle of the news. Conversely, the quality dailies also seem to have regarded it as an important way of keeping the checks and balances on the people in power. Again this difference reinforced the polarization between quality and popular dailies, and offered the critics of the popular press another way of supporting their claim to the superficial and market-driven sensationalism.

This changing professional framework also affected the development of the reportage. In general the genre gained some prominence with the French press still showing the greatest preference for the genre.<sup>163</sup> Even *Le Figaro* and *La Croix*, which in the interwar period had preferred opinion over reporting, warmed up again to the reportage. This can be attributed to the gradual decline of the reflective style in the postwar period, although *La Croix* maintained its Catholic profile.<sup>164</sup> *The Times*

<sup>160</sup> Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, 407-408; Broersma's content analysis however shows a stronger deterioration of the genre.

<sup>161</sup> Broersma, "Subversive Genre," 156-157; Ekström, "Interviewing, Quoting," 27-28.

<sup>162</sup> Ekström, "Interviewing, Quoting," 27-28; Schudson, *Power of News*, 92-93; McNair, "Interrogative moment," 88-91.

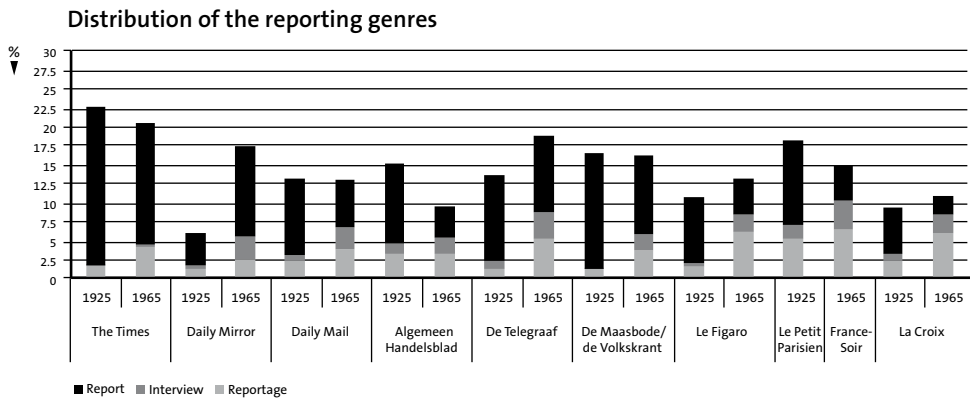
<sup>163</sup> Cf. Martin, *Grand reporters*, 346-348; Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 149-150.

<sup>164</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 224-225.

shows a similar increase, but the results might be somewhat misleading with regard to the reportage. The growth of the genre within the sample of 1965 can entirely be attributed to the inclusion of a very extensive, four pages long reportage about the funeral of Winston Churchill, which shows a clear focus on the atmosphere of the event. Nevertheless, it is likely that the special occasion demanded such an extensive account rather than that it can be attributed to the growing prominence of the genre.

The reportage about Churchill's funeral directs the attention to the role of the genre in British journalism discourse. It seems that the reportage remained to be less prominent in Britain. Moreover, within the polarization of the quality and popular press the stronger the focus on atmosphere and emotions brought the suspicion of 'sensationalism' or 'soft news' along. Especially within the former such accounts were reserved for special occasions. Conversely, within France and the Netherlands, the genre was part of the tradition of the *grand reporter*. Yet, within the changing professional framework the genre was on the advent of a new era in which its discursive freedom was curtailed. As several scholars have illustrated, the literary influence of the way an experience was conveyed and the expression of a mediating subjectivity within the reportage were threatened by the growing importance of the objectivity regime - something I will discuss in detail in the following chapter.<sup>165</sup>

Graph 8.9



Moreover, it seems that the visual appeal and growing importance of television also resulted in a process of adaptation, which contributed to the reshaping of the reportage. Better than any other medium the coverage on television could provide an authentic picture of reality. The immediacy and vivid character of moving images were almost impossible to match in written text.<sup>166</sup> This was reinforced by the growing importance of the objectivity regime. As press historians have shown, within this normative framework the evocative narrative techniques that journalists had used in the prewar period were regarded as being too subjective and considered to discredit the trustworthiness of journalism.<sup>167</sup>

In sum, it seems that the picturesque and personal accounts of the prewar period had outlived their use by roughly the 1960s, which finds support in the increasing reliance on accompanying

<sup>165</sup> Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 150; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 322-326; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 46; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 379-382.

<sup>166</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 323-325; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 45.

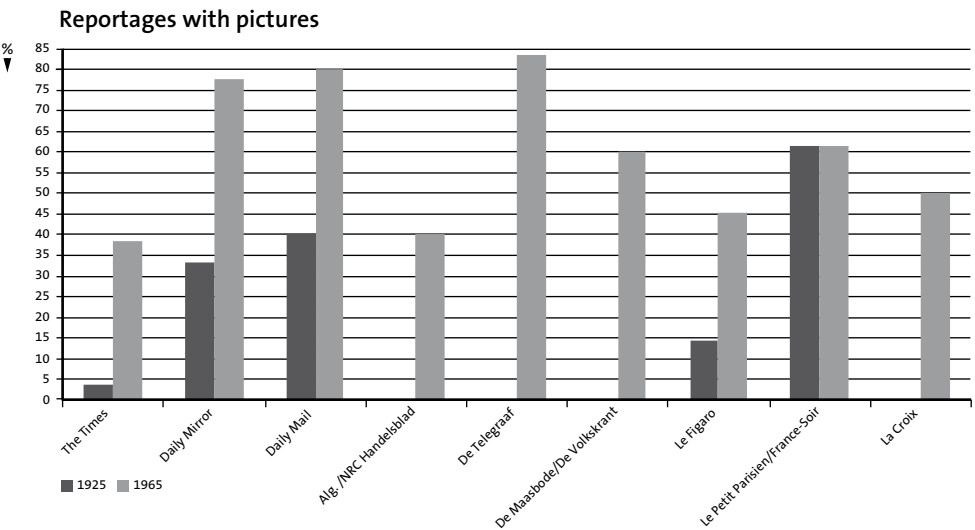
<sup>167</sup> Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 150; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 123-128.



pictures to provide an image of the atmosphere (Graph 8.10).<sup>168</sup> Before the war, reportages were only occasionally accompanied by pictures - only in *Le Petit Parisien* this percentage was already the same as it was in *France-Soir* twenty years after the war. Moreover, as I will show in the following chapter, during this pre-war period such pictures generally only supplemented the story rather than being a substantive addition. For the largest part text remained the key characteristic, through which the event was depicted and the atmosphere conveyed.

As mentioned before, the integration of more and more vivid photographs within the newspaper was one of the strategies dailies employed to compete with this new and attractive news medium.<sup>169</sup> This raises the question whether the abundance of pictures in the dailies did not pose a threat to the reportage - at least to the traditional narrative form of the reportage as pictures now could easier portray the event and its atmosphere than before. As I will illustrate in the next chapter, the combination of journalistic professionalization and the dominance of the visual indeed strongly influenced the features of the reportage and its role in journalistic discourse. I will illustrate this by analyzing the reportages about the Parisian revolt in May and June 1968. The analysis of the coverage of this historic event, which was a hotbed of debate and violence with high stakes, offers an insightful illustration of the new professional role the reporter had assumed and the changing position of the reportage in journalism discourse in the three countries.

Graph 8.10



## Conclusion

My analysis indicates that only in the first decades of the postwar period the active reporting routines were delineated more narrowly according to the objectivity regime, which came to play a pivotal role within the professional framework of journalism. This means that an adjustment of the grand narrative of journalism history is needed, which situates the rise and establishment of this

<sup>168</sup> Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 150; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 371, 377-382.

<sup>169</sup> Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 189, 192; Langton, *Photojournalism*, 33-34.

professional regime already in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, as I have shown in the previous chapters it played a minor role in this period. Moreover, the debate on the norms and standards of journalism had not yet led to a full-fledged rationalization of routines and textual conventions. This changed in the postwar period. My analysis suggests that the discursive characteristics of journalism in the three countries converged. British, Dutch and French dailies alike show an increasing use of sources and direct quotes. In general, interviews and reportages claimed a growing share within a paper that also grew in size. Finally, the dailies all show a rapid growth of the use of pictures, in which particularly the increased prominence of the news photo in the quality dailies is striking.

Yet, considerable changes remained apparent within the press landscapes of the three countries. Especially, France and Great Britain still showed a strong divergence in the way journalism was organized institutionally. In France, the war had incited a heated debate about the collaboration of the press. The blame for this perfidy was put on the commercial foundation of the press, which made journalists put profit over journalistic integrity. To prevent this from happening again the press had to adhere to extensive state regulation. In Britain the growing commercialization was also criticized and the fear of the dominance of a market-driven press, resulting in a diminishing pluriformity and quality of the press infused a debate about journalistic standards as well. Yet, contrary to France, Britain regarded the commercial basis of the press as a prerequisite for an independent press, and maintained the free-market principles underlying the newspaper business in spite certain voices in favour of a stronger interference of the state. The Netherlands adopted an intermediate position, and tried to balance state regulation with a healthy degree of commercialization.

Although the countries chose different paths, they all tried to ensure the independent position of the journalistic domain within society at large. In France and the Netherlands the 1960s brought about a shift in the relations with politics, and political parallelism faded away in these countries. The experiences during the war, in combination with the growing commercial pressures manifesting in the 1960s, gave an impulse to a renewed intensified debate on journalistic quality in which the civic responsibility of the press was emphasized. Throughout this period the watchdog role of journalism became inextricably tied to the objectivity regime, in which independence, impartiality and detachment played a pivotal role. Whereas such ideals had also been present in the debate on journalism, the 1960s showed the emergence of a increasingly coherent journalism practice, where norms, routines and textual conventions were more in tune with each other than before. According to Ruellan journalism practice was for the first time governed by a full-fledged deontology.<sup>170</sup>

My analysis indicates that within this development the dynamic interaction between the quality and the popular press is particularly interesting. As reflective journalism got sidetracked within the development of journalism as a profession, the relation between popular and quality journalism polarized. Both dailies ascribed to an event-centered journalism practice, in which the active reporting routines played a pivotal role. Moreover, they also embraced the watchdog role of the press. Yet, the exact standards governing the routines and texts to fulfil this civic duty were up for debate. Within this process it is elucidating to see how the acceptance of source attribution and the use of direct quotes by the quality dailies, which was partially infused by the proven appeal of such elements in the popular dailies, also meant an incorporation of these elements within their quality profile. So whereas the former had first criticized the latter for the sensationalism of their use of particularly direct quotes, source attribution and quoting now signaled their professionalism.

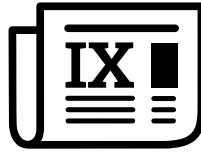
The results suggest that the use of the active reporting routines in combination with a different topical orientation, favoring human interest, lifestyle and sports, was at least partly the reason for

the complaints about sensationalism. Such an journalism practice was equated with a deterioration of journalistic quality standards and the squandering of the dailies' civic duty. Radio, but especially the rise of television as an appealing mass medium, reinforced this polarization as it had a stronger impact on the popular than the quality press. Part of what can be tentatively characterized as a complex process of remediation is also the growing shift on the context of the news events in general, in which particularly the popular dailies seem to have switched their focus to background stories. Again, because of their stronger focus on entertainment this shift was not considered a shift to a more in-depth inquiry into the news, but as an additional step away from their civic duty.

This changing context, in which the objectivity regime came to determine journalism practice and its professional status, ushered in a period of "high modernism" in journalism history.<sup>171</sup> During this period, which would last up until roughly the 1990s, the professional profile of the objective journalist and the subsequent markers of journalistic quality were self-evident. These new circumstances also meant a significant reshaping of the genre of the reportage; especially since the visual element had become so dominant. Moreover, especially within journalism discourse in France and the Netherlands the role of this genre changed considerably. These changes are at the heart of the following chapter in which I will scrutinize the genre of the reportage further by examining the reportages written about the student revolt in Paris in 1968.

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**171** Cf. Daniel Hallin, "The passing of the "high modernism" of American Journalism," *Journal of Communication* 42, no.3 (1992): 16.



# Disconnecting information from experience

## The reportage in the sixties

### The 'sixties' as historical benchmark

The 'sixties' are an important benchmark in the history of the West, referring to a period that is generally regarded as also encompassing the last years of the 1950s and the first few years of the 1970s. The term is often considered shorthand for a ubiquitous social, political and cultural upheaval. The image of a new generation, instigating a counterculture by dismissing and reshaping the hierarchy of a repressive and exclusive society, is engrained in collective memory. Particularly, the culmination of these protests in the student and workers revolt of May and June 1968 in Paris is seen as the embodiment of intense discontent with the dominant culture.<sup>1</sup> Critics have pointed to the mythical status of the decade, which has substituted for historic reality. Historian Gerard DeGroot for example suggests that the sixties have not been researched extensively enough.<sup>2</sup> In spite of this criticism, the sixties have maintained their status as an important historical point of reference.<sup>3</sup>

This also applies to the existing scholarship into Dutch and French journalism history, which has awarded a special status to the sixties as an important period of resistance against the established journalistic standards.<sup>4</sup> Conversely, British press histories have hardly devoted any special attention to this period in journalism history.<sup>5</sup> Although more research is necessary, this difference seems to relate to both the focus within press historiography and to the nature and intensity of the events. Most British press histories have a strong focus on the institutional and commercial development of journalism in comparison to the Netherlands and France. For that reason they have paid much less attention to the general textual development of journalism and to the journalistic accounts of particular journalists. This focus on the institutional and commercial level of journalism might have obscured the influence of the countercultural ideas on British journalism in this era. The institutional organization was less influenced by the countercultural developments than the self-image of journalists and the textual forms they used,<sup>6</sup> Writer, broadcaster and journalist Nigel Fountain

1 Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: cultural revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c.1958-c.1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3-20.

2 Gerard DeGroot, *The Sixties unplugged. A kaleidoscopic history of a disorderly decade* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 1-2.

3 Cf. James Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in aanbouw: Nederland in de jaren zestig* (Amsterdam: Boom, 1995) 9-21; Ilja van den Broek, *Heimwee naar de politiek. De herinnering aan het kabinet-Den Uyl* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2002) 11-28; Thomas Vaessens, *Het boek was beter. Literatuur tussen autonomie en massificatie* (Amsterdam: Vossiuspers UvA, 2006), 11-15.

4 Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 335-352; Muhlmann, *Political History*, 164-194; G. Lange, "Journalistes et médias face aux événements caennais de janvier 1968," in *Histoire et médias. Journalisme et journalistes français 1950-1990*, ed. Marc Martin (Paris: Albert Michel, 1991), 64-76; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 147.

5 Martin Conboy is one of the very few British press historians that has devoted some modest attention to his period, cf. Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 146-147.

6 Cf. Broersma, "From Press History," 18-19.

wrote a book about this period in journalism and showed that it gave birth to a good many of leftist underground papers, such as *Oz*, *IT* (short for *International Times*), *Frendz*, and *Black Dwarf*. These overt political commitment and alternative topical focus of these papers contested the dominant journalism practice. Yet, beside such similarities the differences between the individual underground dailies were manifold.<sup>7</sup> These papers were plentiful, but operated in the margins of the journalistic domain. The lack of attention for these papers within the context of the mainstream press suggests that they did not leave much of a mark on the mainstream national press.<sup>8</sup> This idea is reinforced by the results of my quantitative results, which rather points to the embrace of the objectivity regime in this period.

Next to the divergent scholarly focus, the smaller role assigned to this period in journalism history might also be related to the lesser intensity of the cultural protests in Britain and to the fact that the press landscape was criticized less heavily and less fundamentally after the war.<sup>9</sup> The scholarship into the sixties in Britain shows that the protests focused mainly on the university system and Vietnam. Moreover, the upheavals are conveyed as being more subdued and less infused by a deeply rooted critique on the foundations of society. Many protesters focused their attention quite narrowly on student issues and the dissatisfaction with the British university system was not as strong as it was more liberal and progressive, especially compared to France. In part because of the cautious and relatively relaxed attitude of the police and authorities, the larger protests against Vietnam did not escalate or develop into a demand for fundamental societal changes.<sup>10</sup>

Conversely, in the Netherlands and particularly in France, the societal upheavals, in which students and workers joined forces, were more heated in this period and were aimed at fundamentally changing the static and hierarchical way society was structured. The protests attracted great attention within society, causing a national debate about the way society was organized and the privileged role of the Establishment.<sup>11</sup> Within this debate the organization of the press and its role in society, which was already being debated heatedly in France and the Netherlands since the end of World War II, were also discussed. Thus, the attenuated character of the protests in combination with the fact that the debate about the structure of the press landscape was less heated in Great Britain in this period, might also have contributed to the weaker link between the events in this period and the developments of journalism.

## The New Journalism

In the focus of the journalistic developments throughout the sixties the Dutch and to a lesser extent the French scholars have been inspired by the developments in the United States of America. In American journalism history the sixties are inextricably tied to New Journalism, which is one of the key focus points of the journalistic scholarship into this historical period. In the sixties, American New Journalism emerged in response to the dominant objectivity regime within journalism. It

7 For an introspective overview of the developments in the British underground press throughout the 1960s, cf. Nigel Fountain, *Underground. The London Alternative Press 1966-74* (London: Routledge, 1988).

8 Cf. Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 146-148.

9 What makes this assessment even harder is that this alleged difference in intensity is still debated by scholars, cf. Nick Thomas, "Challenging Myths of the 1960s: The Case of Student Protest in Britain," *Twentieth Century British History* 13, no.3 (2002): 277-297.

10 Cf. Marwick, A. (1998) *The Sixties. Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c. 1958-c.1974*. 560-563, 632-642; These difference in intensity are subject to scholarly debate and not accepted by all scholars, cf. Nick Thomas, "Challenging Myths of the 1960s, 277-297.

11 Hans Rigthart, *De eindeloze jaren zestig. Geschiedenis van een generatieconflict* (Amsterdam/Antwerpen: De Arbeiderspers, 1995), 28-29, 256-261; Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in aanbouw*, 10-22, 126-145.

rejected the objectivity regime and championed a more overtly subjective journalism practice in which (literary) storytelling techniques played a pivotal role. However, the movement represents more than just the adoption of a new set of writing techniques. According to David Eason, New Journalism in America should be defined as: “a set of meta-journalistic operations through which journalism as a language becomes a subject for explicit reflection.”<sup>12</sup> Such accounts thus highlight their own discursive form as a way of meaning-making, which is opposite to what the objectivity regime does. According to John Pauly, this characteristic of New Journalism made it “a form of cultural politics”, which questioned the self-evidence of the underlying assumptions of the objectivity regime. Pauly’s argument links up to an early study by Michael Johnson, in which he argues that New Journalism was part of a larger underground press that emerged in the 1960s as a critical response to mainstream objective journalism.<sup>13</sup>

The objectivity regime had emerged between 1880 and 1920 in America and was much more dominant than in Europe.<sup>14</sup> Yet, throughout the 1960s a growing group of Americans, made up of people from a younger generation, minorities and leftist intellectuals felt that the transformation their society was experiencing could no longer be captured in the objective forms of journalism, which were criticized for covering up a biased perspective favoring the political establishment by claiming objectivity. As Schudson puts it:

To the increasingly numerous and vocal critics, the rhetoric of objectivity seemed hypocritical or deceitful, or in Vietnam, criminal. The adversary culture’s attack on objectivity conjured up a more unified and univocal Establishment culture than in fact existed. Still, there was an ideology of technique and neutrality, and it did conceal other values that, the critical culture demanded, should be open to question.<sup>15</sup>

With that in mind New Journalists, like Tom Wolfe, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, Joan Didion and Hunter S. Thompson, opened up the discussion about journalistic objectivity by adopting a form of reporting in which the mediating subjectivity of the reporter - so typical for journalism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century - played a dominant role. Yet, contrary to that period, during the New Journalists of the sixties often questioned the belief in the reporter’s ability to render a truthful account based on his or her observations and experience.<sup>16</sup> Although New Journalism was an influential movement at that time, the majority of the mainstream press did not outright reject objectivity, but “watered [it] down” according to Ward, allowing for more interpretation and color in the coverage.<sup>17</sup>

Dutch and, to a somewhat lesser extent, French scholars have taken these developments in America in this period as a common point of reference in journalism history. They also relate the developments in this period, such as the emergence of forms of engaged reporting and the use of storytelling techniques, to an increasing criticism on the contemporary journalism practice and a growing disgruntlement with the ideals of objective journalism. This critique echoes a more

<sup>12</sup> David Eason, “New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 15, no. 4 (1982): 145-146.

<sup>13</sup> John Pauly, “The Politics of the New Journalism,” in *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 111-116; Michael Johnson, *The New Journalism. The Underground Press, the Artists of Nonfiction, and Changes in the Established Media* (Kansas: The University Press of Kansas, 1971), xi-xvi.

<sup>14</sup> Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 160-164, 176-188; Schudson, “Objectivity norm,” 157-158, 166-167.

<sup>15</sup> Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 183-184.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 47-55, 59-69; Eason, “Metaphor, Culture,” 142-146; Pauly, “Politics of New Journalism,” 113-115; Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 117-119.

<sup>17</sup> Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 236-237.

general countercultural resistance to the dominant set of norms and values of the establishment. The attention these scholars devote to the New Journalism in the United States suggests that their analysis is rooted in the grand narrative of journalism history that was discussed in the introductory chapter of this dissertation.<sup>18</sup>

However, in the Netherlands and France forms of New Journalism emerged on a smaller scale than in the United States, where it could be found in many influential periodicals, like the *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone*, in the underground press, and sometimes in the national daily press as well.<sup>19</sup> Still, as Pauly and Johnson claim for the American New Journalism, Van den Broek has argued convincingly that Dutch manifestations of New Journalism also have their roots in the broader context of the critical culture of the sixties, which was already discussed in the previous chapter. Therefore, they should not be considered as an isolated phenomenon in the margins of journalism. Van den Broek thus emphasizes New Journalism's relation with broader developments in journalistic discourse.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, in my opinion the impact of New Journalism on the journalism practice in The Netherlands, even within the broader framework of its critical culture, remained much smaller than in the United States. According to Wijfjes, the new ideals about engaged, committed or even literary forms of journalism reverberated mainly in a few periodicals, such as *Haagsche Post* and *Vrij Nederland*.<sup>21</sup> Within the national press, far-reaching experiments or innovation was not found. Within the mainstream national press, the countercultural ideas only manifested themselves in a highly diluted form and gave an impulse to a more critical way of reporting that focuses less on the Establishment. As Wijfjes puts it: "In most cases it just meant giving a voice to people who in the old media constellation would have never been heard."<sup>22</sup>

Forms of New Journalism made no considerable headway in France either. The prior research suggests that alternative forms of journalism appear to have manifested mostly in the shape of politically committed journalism rather than literary journalism.<sup>23</sup> The foundation of the radical paper *Libération* in 1973 by leftist intellectuals Jean-Paul Sartre and Serge July is regarded as the best example of this type of journalism. It is considered "le Mai 68 de la presse."<sup>24</sup> *Libération* - developed out of the alternative press agency, *Agence de presse Libération*, which was established in 1971 - embodied the elevated ideals of the counterculture and contested the institutional and professional framework of journalism that had emerged throughout the 1960s. The paper aimed for an engaged and committed, but entirely independent journalism practice. Moreover, whereas most still existing dailies had by the 1960s returned to a commercial rationale - though less market-driven than the British press - *Libération* rejected such a profit-oriented foundation and did not accept any advertisement within the ranks of the paper. This idealistic endeavor only attracted an intellectual niche market, and for that reasons the paper had structural problems with keeping afloat financially. At the end of the 1970s the countercultural roots of *Libération* therefore had to be more or less abandoned and the paper adopted a more moderate course. It gradually abandoned its committed

18 Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 347-352; José van Dijck, "Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek," *Feit & Fictie* 2 (1994): 66-78; Ilja van den Broek, "De persoonlijke politiek van New Journalism," *Tijdschrift voor Mediageschiedenis* 6, no.1 (2003): 108-123; Muhlmann, *Political History*, 135-194; Lange, "Journalistes et médias," 64-76; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 147.

19 Pauly, "Politics of New Journalism," 119-120; Van Dijck, "Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek," 68-69; The lack of focus for the material context of the New Journalism make it difficult to get a good idea of the outlets such accounts were published in.

20 Van den Broek, "Persoonlijke politiek," 113-120.

21 Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 346-350.

22 Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 346.

23 Cf. Muhlmann, *Political History*, 164-180.

24 Jean Guisnel, *Libération, la biographie* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003), 11.

journalism practice, and in order to stay in business the paper opened its pages to advertisement.<sup>25</sup>

Thus it seems that critical culture of the 1960s influenced journalism discourse only in a strongly attenuated manner. Although press historians have acknowledged this smaller impact of New Journalism in Europe, no sufficient explanation has been offered for this difference. It seems that the strong focus on the United States as a frame of reference within this context has kept scholars from thoroughly scrutinizing forms of New Journalism in relation to the particular way journalism developed in the Netherlands and France before the 1960s.

The entirely different role the objectivity regime played within French and Dutch journalism history can elucidate the smaller role of New Journalism in these countries. Because the objectivity regime was introduced much later in Europe, and never was enforced as stringently as in the United States, it incited less resistance as it had in America in the sixties. Moreover, in France and the Netherlands the long period in which narrative and literary orientated forms of journalism had dominated journalistic discourse made forms of New Journalism less innovative than in America. The use of narrative techniques associated with literature was connected with the form of journalism that had only recently started to fade to the margins of journalism discourse. In their development towards a more independent and professional journalism practice, rooted in the adherence to the objectivity regime, returning to a more subjective form of reporting seems not to have been an obvious choice for most French and Dutch journalists.<sup>26</sup>

## Objectivity and the changing status of the *grand reporter*

As I have already discussed in the previous chapter, journalism was in the course of reshaping and re-legitimizing its position within society by further professionalization in all three countries.<sup>27</sup> Objectivity played an important role as a successful legitimization strategy, but, as Schudson has argued, it also proved to be a successful discursive norm in the socialization of the editorial staff of a daily when staff size is too large to train only informally.<sup>28</sup> From that perspective, it is not altogether surprising that the embrace of the norms, routines, and forms of the objectivity regime developed in tandem with an increase of editorial staff after the war.<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, the objectivity regime aimed to remove all forms of subjectivity from the reporter, like experience, emotions and opinion, from journalism practice. As I will show the use of direct quotes played a central role in circumventing this.<sup>30</sup>

Yet, several factors made the objectivity regime less rigid than it was at its peak in American journalism. Although in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France the long lasting tradition of respectively the importance of opinionated reporting and/or colored descriptions of subjective experiences faded, these roots together with the indirect influence of the critical culture, and the rising status of the journalist as a public figure played a part in more lenient attitude towards the objectivity regime.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, the rise of the latter in all three countries resulted in changes in

25 Pierre Rimbert, "Libération." *De Sartre à Rothschild* (Paris: Liber, 2005), 23-38; Guisnel, *Libération, la biographie*, 10-17; Muhlmann, *Political History*, 164-180.

26 Cf. Martin, *Grand reporters*, 369-371, 378-379; Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 161-164.

27 Cf. Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 160-165; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 352-355, 372-375; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 385-396.

28 Schudson, "Objectivity norm," 151-152, 161-163; cf. Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 160-164; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 123-135.

29 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 192; Van Vree, "Beroep: journalist," 160-164; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 314, 383-386, 393-396.

30 Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 83-101.

31 Cf. Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 477-478; Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 335-352; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 127, 147.



the position of the reporter within journalism discourse in all three countries, thereby effacing the differences between British journalism on the one hand and French and Dutch journalism on the other.

These changes are clearly noticeable in the genre of the reportage. Like mentioned before, the genre did not disappear when an objective journalism practice became the norm, but it was refashioned thoroughly - in which the rise and influence of the television also played an important role. In this period the development of the reportage is marked by the fading prominence of personally invested accounts about the events, which was considered to express an artistic individualism that no longer fitted professional journalists. The great discursive freedom that the *grand reporter* had before the war was curtailed and the reportage was conventionalized, in which process it lost its literary orientation and aspirations.<sup>32</sup> As Martin concludes his research into the development of the reportage and the *grand reporter*:

We met the *grand reporter* of the written press when he began to have a particular appearance within journalism, we leave him in the 1950s when he starts to lose the originality that typified him in the inter-war period. [...] The *grand reportage* has transformed. Albert Londres, Henri Béraud, Édouard Helsey, Jules Sauerwein, and Joseph Kessel have had more heirs than successors.<sup>33</sup>

The discursive changes were accompanied and reinforced by certain institutional changes. As the British press was adopting the objectivity regime, the dailies were also rapidly increasing their amount of editorial content, which was subsequently departmentalized stronger to maintain a clear structure. For that reason papers employed more specialist reporters, who started to organize themselves in groups and associations. This created a group identity, which helped these reporters gain more independence vis-à-vis their editors. Across the board the status and autonomy of the reporter in Britain increased.<sup>34</sup> This was reinforced by the fact that the anonymity of the journalists, which was up until the 1960s enforced in many quality dailies, was abandoned. Because the journalist's name was in the byline, he or she could gain notoriety based on personal qualities rather than derive it only from the status of the profession as a whole.<sup>35</sup>

In the Netherlands and France anonymity had been enforced less strictly and in part because of that the *grand reporters* could grow out into the most esteemed journalists of their country. However, whereas the British reporters after the war gained autonomy, the French and Dutch reporters had to sacrifice parts of their autonomous position to the objectivity regime. Journalism practice according to these principles emphasized its uniformity and made journalists more or less interchangeable as they worked in the same way and filtered out any subjective elements. This also made reporting more suitable for division of labor.<sup>36</sup> Articles, especially reportages, were no longer considered to be an artistic unity. This is exactly why Martin argues that the reportage lost its status as an esteemed genre after the war and the model of the *grand reporter* lost its exemplary position within journalism. These new institutional circumstances allowed for journalists to build their own individual reputation rather than contributing to the reputation of the daily they worked while remaining anonymous. Acquiring professional esteem as an individual offered some reporters the opportunity to reconquer parts of their lost discursive freedom. Like in Britain, the postwar period

<sup>32</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 371, 378-382; Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 150.

<sup>33</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 382.

<sup>34</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 192-193.

<sup>35</sup> Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 135-136; cf. Reich, "Constrained Authors," 707-725; MacDonald, *The History of The Times*, 453-454.

<sup>36</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 382; Jean-Marie Charon, *La presse en France de 1945 à nos jours* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1991), 198-201.

in the Netherlands and France was characterized by the rise of specialized journalists.<sup>37</sup> In all three countries, these journalists acquired status as experts on certain topics. Based on their growing personal status, they also participated in television news programs to offer their perspective on matters at hand. These television appearances acquainted audiences with the faces and work of such individual journalists, which in turn reinforced their individual status. Such esteemed journalists were permitted certain freedoms with regard to the objectivity regime, which allowed them to leave their personal mark on their articles. Instead of the inverted pyramid they could start with an 'anecdotal lead' for instance, which entailed a first paragraph in which they depicted the atmosphere of a certain situation in a more colorful writing style.<sup>38</sup> However, in most cases these liberties were kept within the limits of the objectivity regime.

As I will show in the following analysis, these journalists still largely attempted to efface their mediating subjectivity. Although they integrate more storytelling elements and more subjective coloring, these elements are not tied to the perspective of the journalist. In a research into these issues within a present-day context, Wahl-Jorgenson demonstrates that although storytelling elements such as personalized experience and emotions are considered to be at odds with the presumed rationality of the objectivity regime, they do play an important role within journalism. She suggests that reporters attribute these elements to the sources they have consulted for the account, thereby circumventing the integration of their own subjective perspective. They thus integrate subjective experience and emotions in a way that makes it able to incorporate them within the framework of the objectivity regime.<sup>39</sup>

In a few cases the mediating subjectivity of the reporter did return as the organizing principle of the accounts. Certain highly esteemed reporters, publicists, or literary writers were especially hired to convey their subjective impressions of the world. However, these cases were distinguished from the 'mainstream' reporting by identifying these accounts as columns. The column was a genre that gained prominence within the newspaper in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>40</sup> It offered journalists, but also other people, such as politicians, experts, and literary writers, the opportunity to describe and reflect on the world on personal title, because of their individual status within society. The column had a special status as its genre conventions allow the integration of both fictional and factual information, subsequently setting it apart from ordinary reporting.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the mediating subjectivity of the journalist had not entirely vanished within newspaper journalism. Whereas in the prewar period this subjective way of reporting was considered to be at the heart of professional journalism, in the postwar period it was clearly separated from mainstream reporting. I will illustrate this by analyzing the reportages about the Parisian revolt in May and June 1968. Examining this historic event, which was a hotbed of debate and violence with high political and social stakes, offers an interesting insight in and illustration of the new professional role that the reporter had assumed and the way the genre of the reportage was reshaped.

<sup>37</sup> Martin, *Grand reporters*, 371.

<sup>38</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 338-339; Ruellan, *Professionalisme du flou*, 126-127.

<sup>39</sup> Wahl-Jorgenson, "Strategic Ritual of Emotionality," 2-5.

<sup>40</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 335, 339; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 229-230.

<sup>41</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 348; cf. Marc Lits, "Nouvelle littéraire et nouvelle journalistique," *Le Français Aujourd'hui* 134, no.3 (2001): 36.

## May '68

The year 1968 is generally regarded as the ultimate culmination point of the countercultural resistance of the sixties. Martin Luther King and Senator Robert Kennedy were murdered, and in many European countries as well as in the United States student revolts erupted. After the first signs of the countercultural upheavals in the Netherlands in 1966, where the Provo's organized large protests against America's interference in Vietnam, and the first German and Italian student protests a year later, Marwick calls 1968 it a "pivotal year" in history that fostered the hopes of a fundamentally reformed society.<sup>42</sup> Within this broader European revolutionary context, the Parisian revolt in May 1968 has been assigned a central position by scholars. Marwick ascribes a revolutionary value to it that puts it in a long historic tradition of social upheavals:

1968 is always remembered as the historic year. May 1968 is always remembered as the historic month. Indeed, for that one month events in France, and particularly Paris, echoed great historic moments of the past, 1789, 1830, 1848, 1870. [...] May 1968 seemed to almost all observers to hold the promise of definitive change in government and society: politicians expected the end of the Gaullist regime, students and radicals expected a root-and-branch reformation of society, for it did appear that in universities, in theatres, in factories, in the offices of professional societies, the representatives of the alternative society were taking power.<sup>43</sup>

At the start of May ongoing conflicts between students and authorities of the University of Paris at Nanterre, the Sorbonne, made the administration decide to let the police shut down the university. This brought students and teachers together as they united themselves in a protest against the closing of the Sorbonne. The protest march towards the Sorbonne ended up in a riot between police, and the students and teachers. The heated and violent reaction of the police led to a nation-wide sympathy for the student cause. Leftist intellectuals, poets, novelists, but also large groups of striking workers and union leaders joined the protest. What had started out as a student protest against the hierarchical and repressive organization of the French university system, rapidly turned into a nation-wide protest against the political establishment, in which students, workers, leftist politicians and union leaders protested side by side. The authoritarian and intolerant attitude of the police in combination with the passionate and easily inflammable students and workers led to recurring violent clashes between both parties. Between May and June 1968 *le Quartier Latin* around the Sorbonne University witnessed a violent mix of overt mass protest and guerilla war strategies, in which barricades of piled up bricks, cars and trees were raised by the protesters to ward off the police. Students throwing stones and Molotov cocktails battled against the teargas grenades of the flics (Illustration 9.1).<sup>44</sup>

After an initial period of silence, in which the heavily criticized President Charles de Gaulle was not present in Paris, he returned to deal with the protests. Although many demanded and expected his resignation, he refused to give up his seat, and ordered new elections instead. While organizing the elections, De Gaulle met many demands of the workers, and fostered the fear of anarchy and communism. The counter-protests that were organized in this period by the supporters of De Gaulle indicated that the president was still popular with large parts of the French population as well.

<sup>42</sup> Marwick, *The Sixties*, 585.

<sup>43</sup> Marwick, *The Sixties*, 584.

<sup>44</sup> Marwick, *The Sixties*, 602-618; Rigthart, *De eindeloze jaren zestig*, 255-259.

*Illustration 9.1*

In the end De Gaulle won the elections with an even bigger majority than before. The revolt that had started so rapidly and had cradled the hopes for fundamental societal reforms died out silently and ended largely in a disillusion.<sup>45</sup>

Throughout Europe, the Parisian revolt was considered a crucial event and received a large amount of attention in all the European dailies. Regular correspondents, special correspondents, and even entire news teams of reporters covered the events on a daily basis. Dailies such as *The Times* and *de Volkskrant* devoted more attention to this event than to the subsided countercultural reverberations in their own country, like respectively the anti-Vietnam protests and the occupation of the Amsterdam University building.<sup>46</sup> For that reason the reportages about the Parisian revolts offer a great opportunity to scrutinize the way the genre had developed in the postwar period and sheds light on the way the conception of journalism had evolved in the respective countries. Although the journalist as an individual gained prominence, most of the reportages about this topic in the Netherlands in particular contained no name in the byline. Correspondent in Paris at that time for *de Volkskrant* was Bob Groen and he was responsible for most of the coverage about the Parisian revolt and wrote 10 reportages about the events that I have analyzed for this case study.<sup>47</sup> In Britain and France, the reportages in *The Times* and *Le Figaro*, which added up to respectively 12 and 25 reportages, suggests that the ongoing professionalization enabled and promoted a more collaborative approach. Multiple reporters worked together on stories - which made it impossible in this case to focus on a particular reporter. To be able to cover such events on a large scale - without neglecting the general coverage - a single reporter often did not always suffice and a team of reporters was sent over. Leaving out the subjectivity of the reporter made it easier to collaborate as everybody worked in a similar way. This supports my argument that newspaper journalism in the sixties can best be seen as a discourse,

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Marwick, *The Sixties*, 616-618.

<sup>46</sup> Through a quick scan of the material, I determined that both papers devoted less attention to these events than to the Parisian revolt.

<sup>47</sup> Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 115.

in which the governing notion of objectivity and the division of labor mutually reinforced each other. It is a good example of the interaction between discursive and institutional changes.

Nevertheless, in line with the rise of the 'star journalists' a few reporters in this period seem to have had a greater discursive freedom. Reporters like Charles Hargrove for *The Times* and Max Clos for *Le Figaro* could give a stronger human touch to their stories, but generally remained within the boundaries of the objectivity regime or only stretching these boundaries a little. Occasionally, these reporters entered their accounts, but in general the atmosphere was provided by the sources they consulted.

A reporting practice that goes way beyond this was only found in the accounts of Cees Nooteboom in the Netherlands. He was both a literary writer and a (travel) journalist for *de Volkskrant* and his accounts are a perfect example of the way reporting rooted in the mediating subjectivity of the reporter was still highly appreciated. At the same time this way of reporting was the exception to the rule as the tradition of the *grand reporters* had moved away from the center of journalism discourse. Nooteboom did win the Prize for Daily Newspaper Journalism (*Prijs voor de dagbladjournalistiek*) in 1969. Yet, within the newspaper his accounts were visually separated from regular forms of reporting. The articles were put 'between brackets' by identifying them as columns rather than reportages. Analyzing this particular case conveys the ambivalent position Nooteboom's accounts take within the journalistic domain and sheds more light on the process of professionalization in relation to the fading literary orientation. His journalistic work is best situated at the margins of journalistic discourse and Nooteboom might fit in better with the innovations that were taking place within literary discourse in this period, in which novelists and poets turned to non-fiction and entered the public debate more pointedly.<sup>48</sup> Because of this status as exception to the rule, I have discussed Nooteboom's journalistic work, consisting of 10 reportages, in a separate section.

## Universalizing observation, effacing the personal

The growing uniformity of the 'ordinary' reportages about the Parisian revolt within the three countries clearly supports the conclusions of the previous chapter. The majority of these accounts show a generic structure in which the article is started off with a summary news lead, followed by the body of the account that consists of an alternation of succinct observation and background information or analysis, and the quotes of relevant sources. Finally the reportages are complemented by large news photos. This textual blueprint offers support for Schudson's claims about the way the norms of objectivity constrained and standardized journalism practice. The standardization is also reflected in the stronger collaboration of reporters. Although more research is needed to map the extent of such collaboration within the daily press, the fact that *Le Figaro* published many reportages about the revolts that were written - maybe compiled is a more accurate term - by more than one reporter supports the idea that the idea of the division of labor was gaining prominence. *The Times* also showed signs of such journalistic cooperation as it published reportages that were signed with 'the news team'.<sup>49</sup> This fits in with the longer tradition of the division of labor that was engrained in the process of professionalization of British journalism.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, the collaboration between reporters seems to have been new, supporting my argument that also in Britain the objectivity

<sup>48</sup> For a more elaborate debate of these developments within literature, cf. Hugo Brems, *Altijd weer vogels die nesten beginnen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur, 1945-2005* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2006), 254-277.

<sup>49</sup> McDonald, *The History of The Times*, 452.

<sup>50</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 146-147.

regime was only embraced fully in the postwar period.<sup>51</sup>

With regard to French and Dutch journalism, the shift to a detached and depersonalized way of presenting the events to the reader is arguably the most important difference with the period before the war. Whereas the French and Dutch reporters before the Second World War presented their reportages without hiding that they were based on their personal experiences, the reportages about the Parisian revolt clearly show a tendency towards the effacement of the textual presence of the reporter, as the person who witnessed the events and recounts the story. Occasionally the journalist still made his or her presence known by the use of an overt first person perspective. However, his or her presence at the account is certainly not continuously mentioned or even emphasized as in the French and Dutch prewar reportages. By choosing this way of portraying the events, the reporters aimed to render a universalized account of an event. Nonetheless, a fundamental characteristic of the reportage is its attempt to paint the atmosphere of the events and express the experience of being there. The norms of the news paradigm interfere to a certain degree with the nature of the reportage as a genre that aims to convey the experience of the reporter. This seems to have triggered reporters to try and balance the constraints of the objectivity regime with the focus on experience. For that reason a shifting focus in the narrative techniques can be discerned, which allowed them to fulfill these somewhat contradictory demands.

The depersonalization resulted in reportages that at first glance seem to have no narrator at all. It is as if the story unfolds itself. Obviously, this is impossible as a reporter witnessed the events and subsequently there is always a narrative stance in a story. Still, the reportages are written in a way that tries to hide this fact by effacing all the elements that refer to the narrator.<sup>52</sup> The way the story is written comes across as if reality is passively recorded by a camera that is looking over the shoulder of the different people that figure in the riots. Thus, the narrative stance is de-dramatized. Based on the textual features it cannot be traced back to an actual person that is recounting the story. The following example shows how the description of the riots is depersonalized in this respect.

The result of this was that last night everywhere in Paris groups of three or four hundred people fought a kind of guerrilla battle against the police, which kept the centre of the Quartier Latin - around the crossing of the Boulevards Saint Germain and Saint Michel - occupied forcefully, but saw itself bombarded from all sides by the protesters that started to build barricades here or there. This *perforce* tactic of the protesters created an unclear situation last night. The atmosphere on the left bank was in any case *oppressive* yesterday evening. The massive deployment of police was for many protesters proof that "the Sorbonne would be attacked tonight" and the performance of the police, which started with an offensive of teargas grenades and water cannons very early, demonstrated a *stronger determination* to "end it" than a few weeks before.<sup>53</sup>

Apart from the byline that says 'from our correspondent' - in this Dutch case Bob Groen<sup>54</sup> - the reporter has withdrawn him- or herself from the text entirely and can no longer be recognized as a person of flesh and blood. The depersonalization of the story points to the growing importance of the aim to present information as being detached from someone's subjective experience; an objective reportage. Although more research is necessary, it seems no coincidence that this perspective is reminiscent of

51 Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 193.

52 Erica van Boven & Gillis Dorleijn, *Literair Mechaniek. Inleiding tot de analyse van verhalen en gedichten* (Bussum: Uitgeverij Coutinho, 1999), 183-202.

53 "Gevechten in Parijs," *de Volkskrant*, June 12, 1968.

54 Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 115.

a recording camera, for it links up to the development within television journalism in the 1960s.<sup>55</sup> Technological developments that made cameras more compact and manageable and the invention of synchronized sound recording cleared the road for a more dynamic way of telling a story visually. Especially the American 'direct cinema' had shown how the camera could act as a proverbial 'fly on the wall', whereas its French counterpart *cinéma vérité* interfered more by interviewing people on the spot for instance.<sup>56</sup> Influenced by these forms of documentary, television journalists attempted to catch reality in the act as well, and made news items in which reality seemed to unfurl naturally. However, this did not mean that this representation of reality was entirely free of any subjectivity.<sup>57</sup>

This issue relates to Zelizer's argument about the problematic position of the eyewitness throughout journalism history. In particular the move towards a more objectified way of describing reality is in her eyes the result of an increasing need to hide the obvious and overt subjectivity of the eyewitness account. What constituted a fact became delineated more narrowly and naïve empiricism was replaced with a perspective in which factuality meant eradicating all subjective elements.<sup>58</sup> Yet, as Ward has argued convincingly, this objectified way of writing is at odds with the nature of the reporting process: "The theory of journalistic objectivity took on an epistemologically indefensible position and an inaccurate representation of the reporting process."<sup>59</sup> In most cases, such tension is effaced by the textual conventions, but in several accounts traces of this clash between the passive objectivity that is emphasized in the normative debate and the more active conception of objectivity on the level of the actual routines become apparent. A closer look at the quote above for instance demonstrates that a narrative commentary is subtly interwoven in the accounts. The words "powerful", "necessary", and "oppressive" (put in bold italics in the quote) shed light on the way the event was experienced, which does point to the presence of someone who is depicting and commenting on the events that occur.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, in several cases the first person perspective of the reporters almost shines through in the depersonalized descriptions. They used different ways of reshaping their first person perspective into a description that makes the account come across as objective - or a-perspectival. Take for instance the use of the personal pronoun 'you' (in bold italics in the following quotes) in the abstract below. This is an example of an indirect form of address, which is used to efface the fact that what is conveyed in the account is indeed based on personal and therefore inherently subjective observations.

As **you** drive towards the sea down La Canebière - the principal thoroughfare of this ancient city of one million people - **you** see a road direction sign which reads "Port Autonome".<sup>61</sup>

The same goes for the use of 'one' or *on* in French (in bold), which is often used in a similar way.

<sup>55</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 322-324, 335; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 381-382.

<sup>56</sup> Erik Barnouw, *Documentary. A history of the non-fiction film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 235-262.

<sup>57</sup> Chris Vos, "Van propagandist naar makelaar. De uitvinding van de Nederlandse televisiejournalistiek," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel (Amsterdam: AUP, 2002), 278-281; Kristin Thompson & David Bordwell, *Film History: An introduction* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 483-484.

<sup>58</sup> Zelizer, "On 'having been there'," 419-421.

<sup>59</sup> Ward, *Journalism Ethics*, 198.

<sup>60</sup> In narratological terms this is called a subsided form of auctorial narration [*een afgezwakt auctoriaal vertelperspectief*, FH], in which the narrator acts like an auctorial narrator, giving background information and commentary, but remains non-dramatized, cf. Van Boven & Dorleijn, *Literair mechaniek*, 203-205.

<sup>61</sup> "Marseilles strikers keep up carnival mood," *The Times*, May 22, 1968.

On *rue Soufflot* 15 the doors of the main office of the U.N.E.F. [National Student Union, FH] are guarded by two sturdy fellows, while one sees numerous students coming and going.<sup>62</sup>

Finally, the use of passive sentence constructions is also often employed to hide the fact that the information about the events that is committed to paper is rooted in the personal impressions of the reporter.

The most heard catchphrases at this loud procession were “Professors, no policemen” and “The Sorbonne for the students”.<sup>63</sup>

To live up to the demands of the objectivity regime personal reflection had also become off limits. Such reflection, which is typical for the Dutch and French prewar reportages, obviously foregrounded the presence of the reporter. The subsequent subjectivity of the account conflicted with the novel universalizing tendency of the genre in the postwar period. This focus is reinforced by the lack of judgment from the side of the reporters. Especially in the British and Dutch reportages in the interwar years the reporters ventured into both explicit judgment of the event or situation at hand. This was changing throughout the 1950s and 1960s. With the embrace of the objectivity regime, judgment also disappeared from the ranks of the reportage. Again, this should be seen as a general tendency that developed gradually, and implicit judgment remained a part of some of the accounts. Still in most cases, even in the parts in which the facts are analyzed and put into context, the comment function is mostly passed on to the people that are interviewed, as I will illustrate below.

## Terse information

French and Dutch journalists adopted the terse style of description that the British reportages already displayed in the interwar period. This form of depersonalized reportage on the Parisian revolts concentrating more on the chain of events, and tries to describe them in a clear and succinct way. Therefore, these accounts give a rather straightforward description of the chain of events and focus on clear-cut detailed information, which shows a stronger similarity to the report. The colorful, literary style that had been typical for the French and Dutch reportages was abandoned.

Tonight, several hundred extreme right-wing demonstrators waving large tricolour flags, marched on the Opera to raise the siege. Shouting nationalist slogans, they stormed into the building from the front as the technicians fled to the back. Slogans and flags were removed and the tricolour substituted to triumphant cheers before the demonstrators marched off arm in arm and 12 abreast down the main streets.<sup>64</sup>

In the French reportages this emphasis manifests itself in an explicit and recurring indication of the specific time a certain event occurs. This way of description conveys a feeling of accuracy and accountability, which contributes to the depersonalized factuality of the account, for it emphasizes the cool registration of the chain of events. Illustration 9.2 shows a small fragment of a reportage, in which the reporter displays an extreme form of this strategy by presenting the public a sort of

<sup>62</sup> “Samedi et dimanche: après la drame la réflexion pour les étudiants...et les passants,” *Le Figaro*, May 13, 1968.

<sup>63</sup> “Veldslag in Parijs,” *de Volkskrant*, May 7, 1968.

<sup>64</sup> “Spreading strikes hit at French links with world,” *The Times*, May 21, 1968.



'play-by-play' of the riots. Again, this resembles the reporting style of television journalism with its scene-by-scene constructed narrative.<sup>65</sup>

*Illustration 9.2*

**A 23 h. 30, des barricades se reforment sur un périmètre plus éloigné, quai Conti, à la hauteur de la rue Dauphine, où 300 manifestants s'attaquent à la chaussée, autour de l'ancienne gare Montparnasse, où des jeunes gens, utilisant des camions-bennes du chantier, déversent des mètres cubes de pierrailles et de terreau sur des amorces de barricades.**

**A 0 h. 30, l'assaut final contre une barricade en flammes dressée au bout de la rue Dauphine est donné. Les manifestants, au nombre de 500 environ, disparaissent en direction des Halles; les forces de l'ordre barrent l'entrée du Pont-Neuf.**

**A 1 h. 15, avenue Denfert-Rochereau, à cent mètres du lion de Belfort, deux barricades ont été construites à l'aide de panneaux de signalisation et de matériel de chantier. Les manifestants ont systématiquement cassé toutes les lampes des réverbères.**

**A 2 heures, de nouvelles barricades s'élèvent des deux côtés de la Seine. Il y en a six autour de la Porte Saint-Denis. Un étudiant s'est mis au volant d'un car de touristes belges et l'a mis en travers de la rue. D'autre part, une énorme baricade s'édifie avenue du Maine, à la hauteur de la rue de la Gaité.**

**Rue de Vaugirard, deux autres barrages sont dressés.**

In this example, the lay-out and the short declarative sentences that typify the short descriptions reinforce each other and stress the factuality of the account.

In general, the descriptions thus leave out any expressive descriptions. Occasionally a colorful comparison is still integrated, but the imagery is highly conventionalized, and such 'dead metaphors' (example in bold italics in the following quote) are hardly recognized as such.<sup>66</sup>

4.30 p.m. On the Place de la République *an actual sea of people* spills its surplus of people in the surrounding boulevards, streets, small passageways. Strong and tough men with a large red ribbon around their lower arm. The protesters are channeled. There are girls in mini-skirts, workers with caps, bourgeois, high school students, porters, clergymen, engineers, bearded anarchists, the little "red eglantine" [a symbol for the political left, FH] in their button hole and holding their black flag high up in the air.<sup>67</sup>

The quote above conveys the atmosphere by adding details, but remains a rather succinct description of the situation.

This lack of conspicuous imagery is also an effect of the stronger focus on the provision of information instead of conveying the authentic atmosphere. As we have seen in the previous case studies, imagery played a central role in conveying reality on an experiential level. By using metaphors and comparisons, a

reporter was able to portray the interaction between 'the world out there' and his or her emotions, values and prior knowledge. Such stylistic devices thus played an important part in conveying the personal perception of reality in these countries before the war, but this changed in the postwar

<sup>65</sup> Thompson & Bordwell, *Film History*, 483-484; cf. Richard Kallan, "Style and the new journalism: a rhetorical analysis of Tom Wolfe," *Communication monographs* 46 (1979): 52-55.

<sup>66</sup> Van Boven & Dorleijn, *Literair mechaniek*, 175-176.

<sup>67</sup> P. Bois, J. Creiser, P. Macaigne & J.-M. Tassel, "Un véritable fleuve humain a traversé Paris," *Le Figaro*, May 15, 1968.

period. Colored and evocative imagery, like metaphors and other striking stylistic devices, is one of the elements that needs to be removed from journalism according to the objectivity regime as it undermines its legitimization of its truth claim.

The decline of imagery is reinforced by the dominance of the typically depersonalized third person perspective. In fictional stories such descriptions, which contribute greatly to the atmosphere that is conveyed in the story, are often passed on to the 'dramatis personae'. The story is then told from the perspective of a character or multiple characters, a technique that is also typical for the American New Journalism.<sup>68</sup> However, because of the more constrained use of narrative techniques of the reportage within mainstream journalism, it was not possible for the reporter to adopt the perspective of the people he witnessed. Looking in the minds of the sources consulted was considered downright impossible or at the least highly problematic.<sup>69</sup>

## Tangible anecdotes and short impressions

Borrowing the senses of the reporter was no longer an option and the days of the mediating subjectivity as organizing principle were over. The reportages about the revolt mostly read like a series of descriptions of different scenes that are ordered chronologically. The atmosphere resides in the attention for small details, and the integration of characteristic anecdotes. A nice example of the latter is the following anecdote that can be found in one of the reportages in *Le Figaro*. It illustrates how everyday life in Paris had come to a standstill.

Noon, boulevard Haussmann. In an enormous traffic jam, in which drivers show an angelic patience, a lady leaves her car in the middle of the street.  
- I am completely dry, I don't know how I can get home.<sup>70</sup>

Interestingly enough this same anecdote is found within the columns of *The Times* a day later, suggesting that the journalists also seemed to keep track of the coverage of their colleagues.

Motorists wait for hours to fill their tanks and extra cans with petrol, but some are still caught unprepared in the traffic jams. An elderly woman whose cars sputters to a halt in the middle of a *Grand Boulevard*, abandons it and complains to another driver making no progress: "I am completely dry, I don't know how I can get home."<sup>71</sup>

The descriptions of such short episodes play an important part in the ability of the reportage to convey the atmosphere of the situation in Paris.

Especially the French reportages are often structured as a sequence of such short impressions. On such occasions chronology and the use of marked indication of time helps to build up tension, leading up to a form of climax of the account. So, although the already mentioned play-by-play contributes to the a-perspectival registration, the way the reporter structures this succession of uninvolved and cool impressions also serves the purpose of conveying the feelings of anxiety and agitation that builds up and culminates in violent riots.

<sup>68</sup> Eason, "New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture," 142; Van Dijck, "Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek," 66-67.

<sup>69</sup> Eason, "New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture," 142.

<sup>70</sup> H. Debaisieux, P. Macaigne & L. Bonnet, "La vie quotidienne des Parisiens au temps... des grèves," *Le Figaro*, May 21, 1968.

<sup>71</sup> S. Ungar, "Paris fears rats as garbage piles up in street," *The Times*, May 22, 1968.

It is around 8 p.m. when between two and three hundred protesters with flags are crowding around on Place Saint-Michel. The police forces immediately shut down the bridges. At 20.15 p.m., after having found a way through the Petit-Pont onto the left bank, they [the police, FH] executed charges, throwing offensive grenades and brushed the square clean.

At 21.10 p.m. the Place de l'Odeon is cleared instantly by the police forces.

[...]

At 21.30 p.m. the riot police is climbing back up the Rue de Rennes and force back a group holding many red in black flags in the direction of the Montparnasse train station.<sup>72</sup>

In the above example the reporter thus makes clever use of the composition, and exploited the narrative techniques that comply with the norms of the objectivity regime to provide a vicarious experience.

## The dual purpose of direct quotes

The increased importance that interviewing and direct quotes play in the reportages should also be seen in the light of the growing prominence of the objectivity regime. The Dutch accounts are an exception in this case, which fits in with the persisting hesitance of Dutch journalists to integrate direct quotes as demonstrated in the previous chapter. The few quotes that are present in the Dutch reportages do not reflect the aim of actively seeking people out to elicit information, but are more focused on conveying atmosphere.

After the demonstration was rescinded, the cry "To the Elysée", the residence of De Gaulle, could be heard from the mouths of several hundreds of leftist protesters.

[...]

A right-wing demonstration was taking place there by the way, which showed that not all of Paris supported the protest against the police and De Gaulle. This right-wing protest focused mainly on the Chinese embassy. Catchphrases such as "Vietcong murders" and "France for the French" could be heard."<sup>73</sup>

In general, the Dutch accounts have maintained their preference for depicting observation.

This is not the case for the French and British reportages. Although observation still played an important role in the accounts, the British, and especially the French reportages much more often showcased the responses from politicians, police officers or students involved, conveying their particular take on the situation. Again, this is also part of the strategy of moving away from the reporter as mediating subjectivity between reality and the reader. Instead of observing an event and conveying an authentic experience by describing the impression it made on the reporter, the perspective shifted to the people involved. The reporter no longer acted as mediating subjectivity, but rather the sources recount what happened and provide the reader with their perception and interpretation of the event.

This increasing focus on the interpretation, experience and views of the sources might also be related to the growing emphasis on analysis and background information under influence of the television that was discussed in the previous chapter. Still, this is only a tentative explanation that

<sup>72</sup> Max Clos et. al, "Après le saccage du centre de la capitale," *Le Figaro*, June 13, 1968.

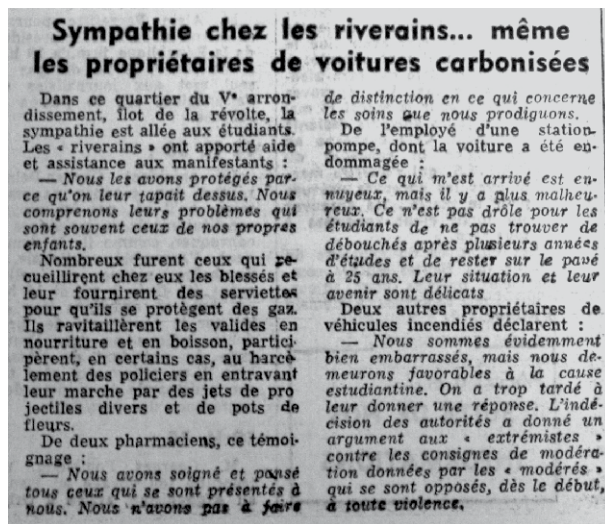
<sup>73</sup> "Parijs in wanorde," *de Volkskrant*, May 14, 1968.

needs more research to substantiate it. The following quote is a good example of the prominence of the sources. This excerpt from a reportage by Charles Hargrove on the strike by the workers demonstrates how his story relies mostly on the statements of several people involved. Although the reporter is not entirely invisible it is clear that the interpretation is provided by the sources that are consulted.

"Our claims are not new. The workers are now conscious that they can obtain what they ask for, that the working class is in a position to win", another remarked. A third, however, added a rider that society was not yet challenged by the labour movement as a whole. He was expressing the fears of some unions that strike action should become political and thereby lose its cohesion. "Students came first. They acted as a spark. They caused the Government to yield. The May 13 mass demonstrations in Paris and throughout the country were very important. They gave us the feeling we could go ahead. The extreme left-wing movement (meaning anarchists, Trotskyists, Maoists and the like) through students' representatives, have gained some weight in the eyes of the workers. They showed they were not afraid of fighting for their conviction", a strike leader emphasized.<sup>74</sup>

Almost the entire article consists of different sources explaining their views and interpretations of the situation. A similar structure can be found in several of the French reportages, as illustration 9.3 shows.<sup>75</sup>

Illustration 9.3



Certain French reportages however take this narrative technique a step further than their British counterparts and almost solely consist of quotes. In such cases entire dialogues are depicted. In these cases rendering the discussion between the people involved not only provides the diverging takes on the situation, but also acts as a means of conveying the heated atmosphere of the situation in Paris, in

<sup>74</sup> Charles Hargrove, "Red flag flies over the shipyards of France," *The Times*, May 20, 1968.

<sup>75</sup> "Samedi et dimanche: après le drame la réflexion pour les étudiants... et les passants." *Le Figaro*.

which opposing groups of people were constantly in dispute with each other. The following quote is a prime example and comes close to a part of script or play, only showing the lines of the different actors, or sources in this case.

But above all people are talking. They talk constantly. [...] A man in his sixties, civil servant, tweed vest, tired, decoration of the Legion of Honor [highest national decoration in France, FH], is debating with two workers and a sturdy brunette. "peace needs to be restored. Violence doesn't lead to anything."

First worker: "If we hadn't caused this chaos, nobody would have worried about us. Now that we have, everybody is discovering that we are right."

Brunette to the decorated man: "Stupid idiot."

Second worker: ""Let him talk. Everybody is entitled to his own opinion."

First worker: "We have never accomplished anything through negotiation. In sum, we are starving."

Civil servant: "You don't appear to be that thin. Nowadays, everybody wants everything instantly. I have worked much harder than you. In my childhood, nobody knew what meat was."

Worker: "That's it. He is now going to tell us that workers are not entitled to steak."

Civil Servant: "You are twisting my ideas."

Brunette: "What an oaf!"<sup>76</sup>

Together with the anecdotes that appeal to the reader's imagination, the representation of such dialogues is the most important techniques to render a vicarious experience. It is a way of conveying atmosphere that complies with the norms of the news paradigm.

## 'A picture is worth a thousand words'

As the previous chapter showed, pictures had started to play a very important role within the genre of the reportage. Yet, they still had an ambivalent status. Printing many pictures could signal sensationalism, but their use was also praised for the objective and direct depiction of reality. This latter point can in part explain why pictures became a more accepted feature in the postwar period. Photography derived its authority to an important extent from its status as a form of eyewitness reporting that was seemingly free of the apparent drawbacks of subjectivity that written eyewitness accounts were often reproached for.<sup>77</sup> The illusion of objectivity was in this respect thus much stronger within visual ways of telling a story, because of the status of its technological foundations. A photograph was believed to be unable to make up - although the ability to exaggerate reality was acknowledged given the critique on the supposed sensational nature of the medium.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, pictures were also an interesting feature in general, because of their visual appeal that made them an important strategy in the growing competition with television.

The pictures in the prewar reportages mostly offered a rather isolated and static illustration of a certain aspect of the story; often a portrait of someone or a picture of a landscape as can be seen in the illustrations 9.4 & 9.5.

<sup>76</sup> Max Clos, "Au quartier latin après l'emeute...", *Le Figaro*, May 27, 1968.

<sup>77</sup> Zelizer, "On 'having been there'", 418-421.

<sup>78</sup> Åker, "Photography, objectivity and the modern newspaper," 327-335; Matt Carlson, "The reality of a fake image. News, norms, photojournalistic craft, and Brian Walski's fabricated photograph," *Journalism Practice* 3, no.2 (2009): 129-131; Don Slater, "Photography and modern vision: the spectacle of 'natural magic,'" *Visual Culture*, ed. Chris Jenks (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), 220-223.







This offers a strong contrast with the photos accompanying the reportages about the Parisian revolt (Illustrations 9.6 - 9.9). The latter are large, dynamic, and lie much more at the heart of most of the reportages, for they vividly encapsulate the essence of the accounts. The reader only needs one glance to grasp what is going on.

### Illustrations 9.6 & 9.7



### Illustration 9.8

10 NEWS DIARY THE TIMES MONDAY MAY 13 1968

Turn-up cobblestones and wrecked cars litter a street in Paris after the pitched battle between students and riot police. Picture by G. H. Warhurst of *The Times*

## Sorbonne students man the barricades

From CHARLES HARGROVE—Paris, May 12

I was an eye-witness of the battle of the Latin Quarter in the early hours of Sunday morning. It might have been in the days of the Paris Commune. The barricades of paving stones topped by red flags, and enveloped in dense clouds of smoke; the occasional burst of a red signal flare against the dark sky; the flames shooting up from the burning vehicles; the occasional loud explosion; the police prancing charging slowly, the shouting, waving, stamped student insurgents, the strains of the "Marseillaise" and the "Internationale" breaking now and then through the din, the first aid teams rushing to the rescue with stretchers—it all had the makings of a terrifyingly realistic historical reconstruction, barring the actual shooting to kill. But it was no make believe.

I had spent the earlier part of the night wandering up the Boulevard St. Michel, where little groups of students clustered round transistor radios, listening to progress reports on the negotiations in the study of M. Jean Rochu, the rector of the Sorbonne, with its delegates, including Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the leader of the students now promoted to an official role; and of the conference at the Ministry of the Interior between M. Louis Joxe, the acting Prime Minister, and several members of the Government.

The police, reinforced this time again with contingents of the C.R.S., the special riot squad, effectively sealed off all the approaches to the Sorbonne, their vans set across the streets leading up to it. Within the forbidden perimeter there was a dusky stillness, broken only by the occasional sound of a revving engine, or the crackle of a short-wave radio issuing situation reports. The glint of a helmet and the shine of a black police machine-gun were occasionally caught in a street light.

At the top of the Boulevard St. Michel, opposite the Luxembourg Gardens, battle lines were drawn up. Members of the student union, linking arms, kept the demonstrators clear of the police, and avoided clashes. But soon there was a disturbing bustle of activity on the students' front, and the sound of iron implements against stone. "They are tearing up the roadway and building barricades," a policeman remarked to me. "There will be trouble before the night is out."

I moved from behind the police barriers, with two bare bricks in position, at the bottom of the Rue Gay-Lussac, down the Boulevard St. Michel, where boys and girls (almost as many of the latter) by no means all of the bestial type formed a human chain passing on paving stones to the big barricades drawn across the thoroughfare. Parked cars made up its core and on top of them, any material or trash that came to hand.

Students worked at it with extraordinary intensity. One group had even got hold of a compressor and automatic drill from a building site, and set it working to chisel of snickers. People in windows of neighbouring blocks of flats. One barricade was already over 6ft. high, and students were driving nails through boards and setting them in position on the glass in front of it, to burst the tyres of police trucks when the assault came.

At 2.30 a.m., things began to move on the front of the "representatives of order" as they are called in French, officials. Instructions had obviously come from on high to clear the barricades at whatever cost. Senior officers held order groups; the troops adjusted the chinstraps of their helmets, and their goggles; tightened their grip on their long night sticks, and checked their tear gas grenades. Then they moved on, in columns of companies, down the boulevard towards the barricades.

I watched them from the railings of the Luxembourg Gardens. Two red flares went up, presumably to coordinate the attack with the other companies of police down there. Slowly, inexorably, they pressed on. Then a hell was unloosed, and a broadside of tear gas grenades crashed into the first barricade, some aimed at point-blank range at the students. The scalding smoke soon filled the air, and the attacking police, in spite of goggles, coughed and spat and wept behind the barricade, where an occasional figure throwing a fire bomb or paving stone appeared, ghostlike, through the smoke, others must have become quite unrecognisable. "It's no ordinary tear gas," a French newspaper colleague remarked, as whiffs of it blew back our way. "It's got the American use in Vietnam."

The first barricade fell without much trouble. The second, at the corner of the Rue Gay-Lussac, was a tougher proposition. Tear gas grenades crashed upon it, and none immediately too (the Luxembourg television team caustically said so in a running later yesterday morning), which set fire to the cars wedged in it in mid-air. There was a pause. Then people on the upper floors of apartment houses on the other side of the street from the gardens began throwing flower pots, stones, and anything that came to hand on to the police missed below, causing them to scatter rather sheepishly.

But retaliation was swift. The grenade throwers were aimed at the darkened windows, and the targets pointed out, as shot upon that was fired directly into dwellings. Some ricocheted against the walls or iron shutters to fall back on the attackers. Even behind the police lines, the air had become almost unbearable. "The inhabitants of the Latin Quarter are with the students. They can't stand the police," my French colleague added.

After a moment's hesitation the offensive resumed. More tear gas as new supplies were rolled up to the front. Some students, with great bravery, occasionally rubbed across the street to throw a fire-bomb, or drove another car into the fray to act as a buffer. But they could not stop the progress of more numerous, better equipped forces. When the police had reached one barricade they seized the paving stones and showered them on in defiance, before capturing the obstacle and pursuing

their mopping up operations as flat dwellers showered water on the students to give them some relief from the tear gas. I heard later that they had given refuge in hallways and flats themselves to the students who scattered before the police. These boys and girls may not have known what they were fighting for, but they certainly fought with the energy of despair.

A few hours later I returned to the scene of battle. The approaches to the Sorbonne were a spectacle of desolation. The roads were up in many places, but stop signs torn down, shop windows shattered. In the Rue Gay-Lussac, where the fighting had lasted until after five, some 40 burnt-out cars littered the roadway. Fresh reinforcements of police stood at street corners, controlling movement, and little groups of students, red-eyed from lack of sleep and tear gas, argued passionately and nervously the battlefield. Their mood was obviously ugly.

"Come and see what those wretches were firing at the boys," a woman said to me as she dragged me into her shop to show me canisters of tear gas. "The foreign press must know, for ours will not tell the truth."

The upshot of the wildest night Paris has lived since the days of the liberation was as follows: 367 injured, 22 of them seriously (four students and 18 police); 60 cars burnt out, 128 damaged, not to speak of broken shop windows, torn up streets, and the rest.

As a result the vicarious experience, which the reportages offer, seems to rely for an increasing part on these photographs. The Dutch and British dailies sometimes even refrained from any text at all - besides a few captions - and published full-fledged photo reportages (Illustration 9.9). These entirely visual representations of an event suggest that the colored descriptions, subjective impressions and expressive imagery, raising suspicion within the context of the objectivity regime, were replaced with vivid and evocative visual material to convey the experience of an event. These clusters of pictures tell a story and highlight the different aspects of the event, in which photographs that candidly capture reality 'in action', human-interest pictures, and visuals conveying the overall atmosphere are juxtaposed in order to capture the different aspects of the event. Their goal is to give the impression that there is no perspective - the sense that reality is caught in the act and is represented in an unmediated manner - which is why these photo reportages fit in nicely with the objectivity regime. The emphasis on pictures in the reportage can therefore be seen as part of the answer to the more constrained framework with regard to conveying an experience.<sup>79</sup>

Illustration 9.9



The reportages of the student riots and the general use of pictures in the dailies, support the claim that throughout the 1950s and 1960s the use of pictures became a given. The way the characteristics

79 Cf. Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 189, 197.



of the reportage changed, together with the prominence of photographs and photo reportages, offer some support for my analysis in the previous chapter. There, I suggested that the quality dailies showed the most resilience in their competition with the television by first trying to mimic television's way of covering the events rather than immediately shifting their focus in this respect. In general, the fact that the pictures are at the core of the article, whereas the textual material, which is minor to begin with, plays a secondary role is telling. It points to a growing emancipation of visual material. The historical dominance of text over image is questioned. Text was no longer considered to be the only respected way to represent reality, but the visual appeal and emotional impact of pictures were gaining appreciation as an alternative instead of only a poorer way of representing reality. This links up to the way quality journalism incorporated popular elements within a quality framework. In a similar way the status of photography was revalued within the postwar period.<sup>80</sup>

## The appreciation of a literary exception

The results of this case study suggest that there is a substantial difference between the discursive freedom of the reporters and their position within journalism discourse in the postwar period and that of their prewar predecessors. In particular the reportage series by Nooteboom shows that reportages in which the mediating subjectivity acted as an organizing principle, though still appreciated, had become disentangled from the conception of professional journalism and had moved to the margins of journalistic discourse.<sup>81</sup> In that sense his work can be clearly distinguished from a few of the British and French reportages that show some subjective elements.

Within the selection of French and British reportages about the Parisian revolts, the later editor-in-chief of *Le Figaro*, Max Clos (1925-2002), and esteemed foreign correspondent of *The Times*, Charles Hargrove (1922), have on a few occasions also written accounts, in which they are overtly present.<sup>82</sup> Hargrove for instance presents himself as an eyewitness of the clash of the police and the protesters.

A few hours later I returned to the scene of the battle. The approaches to the Sorbonne were a spectacle of desolation. The roads were up in many places, bus stop signs torn down, show windows shattered. In the Rue Gay-Lussac, where the fighting had lasted until after five, some 40 burnt-out cars littered the roadway. Fresh reinforcements of police stood at street corners, controlling movement, and little groups of students, red-eyed from lack of sleep and tear gas, argued passionately and surveyed the battlefield. Their mood was obviously ugly.<sup>83</sup>

Clos has written similar reportages, in which he describes the 'day after'.

I was struck by the energy and devotion of the boys and girls of the order squad. But they were aided in their difficult task by older, calmer, trained trade union activists that were accustomed to this kind of situation. They are reliable and skilled professionals. Saturday, they played a very important role in calming the young people, which are more easily agitated, sometimes a bit exalted, often uneasy, sometimes inclined to be "willful".<sup>84</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 189-192, 197-198; Becker, "Photojournalism," 130.

<sup>81</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 348; Mulder, "Redigerende hand," 150; Martin, *Grand reporters*, 379-382.

<sup>82</sup> Charles Hargrove, *Un gentleman du Times. 1944-2000 Paris - Berlin - Tokyo - Bonn* (Paris: Tallandier, 2001), 201-211; Henri Amouroux (ed.), *Grands reportages. Les quarante-trois prix Albert-Londres (1946-1989)* (Paris: Éditions Arléa, 1989), 657.

<sup>83</sup> Charles Hargrove, "Sorbonne students man the barricades," *The Times*, May 13, 1968.

<sup>84</sup> Clos, "Au Quartier Latin après l'émeute...."

These reportages, signed with their names, are written from a first person perspective and therefore contain somewhat more subjective reflection than the other reportages written about this event. However, the personality of the reporters is much more subdued and for the largest part the reporters still adhere to the standards of the objectivity regime, telling the story rather matter-of-fact. Moreover, most personal impressions and value judgments are left for the sources to divulge. The personal touch of Clos and Hargrove, in spite of their greater freedom than ordinary reporters, is still quite clearly constrained. Nootboom on the other hand fully embraces his own subjective outlook on and representation of reality. What makes his reportage series in *de Volkskrant* so interesting is that it earned him the prize for daily newspaper journalism in 1969. Studying this particular series suggests that although the reportage within mainstream journalism abandoned its overt eyewitness status in accordance with the objectivity regime, its more subjective counterpart did not vanish, but was repositioned within the margins of journalism discourse as an artful exception.

Nootboom (1933) made his literary debut with *Philip and the others* (*Philip en de anderen*) in 1955, establishing his reputation as a novelist. A year later he published his first collection of poems, which reinforced his position in the literary domain. From the start of his literary career, Nootboom has always combined his work as a literary writer with his journalistic work, which has affected his position in both domains. That same year he published his first poetry, he also published his first reportage, titled 'Premeditated murder' ('Moord met voorbedachte rade') in the Amsterdam daily *Het Parool* about the revolt in Hungary against the Stalinist regime in 1956.<sup>85</sup>

This series of reportages was the start of a career as a prolific travel journalist, who published his reportages mostly in the daily *de Volkskrant*, the weekly *Elsevier*, and later on the monthly glossy magazine *Avenue*.<sup>86</sup> In comparison to his other journalistic work, the reportages about Hungary and his coverage of the Student Revolt in Paris focus on current events the strongest. Most of his reportages are more concerned with the depiction of a foreign country and culture, without a necessary link to newsworthy events.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, these accounts deviated from the typical journalistic conventions of the reportage and testify to a greater discursive freedom with regard to the depiction of reality. This large discursive freedom also characterizes Nootboom's accounts about the Parisian revolt. When at the end of May the guerilla-like battle between the protesters and the authorities reached its high point, Nootboom arrived in Paris. Together with his photographer and friend Eddy Posthuma de Boer he had driven to Paris to experience the revolt and write about it. Unlike other reporters covering the event, such as Bob Groen for *de Volkskrant* or Eric Boogerman for *Algemeen Handelsblad*, Nootboom had more or less *carte blanche* with regard to the nature and form of his stories. This reinforced by the statement by Joop Lückér, editor-in-chief of *de Volkskrant* at the time of the Parisian revolt, who said that he only would send Nootboom to "cover the falling of the leaves."<sup>88</sup> Nootboom was thus not considered a reporter in the sense of a 'news getter', but was there to paint the atmosphere of the events.

This relates to the fact that his accounts about Paris, having most of the characteristics of the genre of the reportage, were identified as columns within the newspaper - a genre in which fact

85 Dick Welsink, "Cees Nootboom: een leven in data," in *Cees Nootboom. Ik had wel duizend levens en ik nam er maar één!* (Amsterdam/Antwerpen: Uitgeverij Atlas, 1997), 149-155; Jan Brokken, "De voorbije passages van Cees Nootboom," in *Over Cees Nootboom. Beschouwingen en interviews*, ed. Daan Cartens (Den Haag: BZZZTôH, 1994), 20-21; Françoise Opsomer, "Een oud besluit, een nieuw begin," in *Over Cees Nootboom. Beschouwingen en interviews*, ed. Daan Cartens (Den Haag: BZZZTôH, 1994), 168-171.

86 Welsink, "Cees Nootboom: een leven in data," 149-155.

87 Opsomer, "Een oud besluit," 168-171.

88 Joop Lückér cited in: Arjen Peters, "De Parijse beroerte," *de Volkskrant*, May 2, 2008.

and fiction can be mixed freely.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, like travel journalism this genre has strong ties with literary discourse, and in the 1960s and 1970s many literary writers started writing columns on the side.<sup>90</sup> The fact that the reportages of Nootboom have been compiled and published under the title *Parijse beroerte* [the Parisian stroke, FH] also underlined his literary *status aparte*.

Nootboom's status as a literary writer and columnist signaled to the readership that his accounts had the status of an exception and did not necessarily adhere to the dominant professional norms. This way the daily could profit from the literary prestige and qualities that Nootboom brought with him, while it at the same time neutralized any critique with regard to the way journalism was practiced in these accounts. Nootboom himself also acknowledged this different approach and greater freedom when he reflected a few decades later on this period in Paris and implicitly points to the highly personal impression he conveyed in his accounts:

It was a unique experience, Paris '68. It was a dream. You didn't go to bed anymore. You wanted to be present at everything. The days and nights got strung together. It was poetry. Obviously it was also something else. But for me, the reporter who was walking around there at that time, it was first and foremost poetry.<sup>91</sup>

This was also explicitly stated by the Dutch politician and close friend of Nootboom, Hans van Mierlo, when he typified his travel reportages in his laudation of Nootboom on having won the P. C. Hooftprijs [arguably the most prestigious literary prize in the Netherlands] for his literary oeuvre in 2004. Van Mierlo emphasizes that Nootboom's depictions of reality cannot be removed from the expression of the emotional impact reality has on him as a writer.

This is Cees Nootboom [...] the unequalled master in evoking scenery, cities, cathedrals, monasteries and visual works of art. His descriptions of color, sound, scent and the state of the weather are interweaved with the expression of how his observations affect him: feelings of amazement, admiration, joy, melancholy, and it is in this that the reader recognizes his own emotions and gets the feeling that he is reading something he has seen before, but had forgotten about.<sup>92</sup>

The quotes above suggest that Nootboom's approach to the events in Paris centers on the mediating subjectivity of the eyewitness reporter. Subsequently, his accounts are diametrically opposed to the depersonalizing and objectifying tendencies of the majority of the reportages about the Parisian revolt. This suggestion is confirmed by my analysis of his reportage series. Nootboom focuses more on conveying the revolutionary atmosphere that was ubiquitous in Paris, rather than providing a detailed overview of the daily events. For instance, no actual description of the riots can be found in Nootboom's accounts, whereas such issues are an important focus in accounts by other journalists.<sup>93</sup> His accounts convey a highly subjective perspective on the event, which is illustrated with many small personal anecdotes, often written in an evocative style. Take for instance the description of the protest march Nootboom witnessed on the first day he and his photographer roamed through Paris:

<sup>89</sup> For a characterization of the column, see point 8 of the bulletpoint 'waarheidsgetrouw' ['truthful', FH] on the website of the Dutch Association of Journalists: [www.nvj.nl/ethiek/code-voor-de-journalistiek](http://www.nvj.nl/ethiek/code-voor-de-journalistiek).

<sup>90</sup> Brems, *Alweer vogels*, 381-384; Erwin Wijman, "De column als literair genre," *Bzzltetin* 17, no.164 (1989): 27-31.

<sup>91</sup> Brokken, "De voorbijge passages," 21.

<sup>92</sup> Hans van Mierlo, "Laudatio bij uitreiking P.C. Hooftprijs 2004 aan Cees Nootboom," in *In het oog van de storm. De wereld van Cees Nootboom*, ed. László Földényi et al (Amsterdam/Antwerpen: Uitgeverij Atlas, 2006), 216.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 115.

We go and sit on the side, at the feet of a lady who starts to sing or sings along with the Internationale every ten minutes - and then we see it pass us by for almost two hours - a procession that never quits, fills the boulevard on both sides, students, Spanish workers, hospital personnel dressed in white, typesetters, printers, chauffeurs, hotel personnel, teachers, all groups with their own songs, all ages, often arm in arm, unbelievably many women and girls, everything else that otherwise walks the Paris' pavement, a happy crowd, which finally like a river disappears in itself. The head is already out of sight a long time, but standing on a bench I see the river flowing through, the largest crowd I have ever seen.<sup>94</sup>

By describing the image of the protesters passing by with the metaphor of a flowing river the description becomes much more tangible. Nootboom is constantly at the center of his accounts. His presence as an eyewitness plays a pivotal role in the reportages and it is abundantly clear that it is his subjective observation and perspective that determines the story.

The use of evocative imagery is not the only way Nootboom tries to convey the experience. In an attempt to give the reader an idea of the chaotic profusion of slogans, pamphlets, speeches, and debates he deliberately breaches the coherence of the common story composition. On two occasions, Nootboom published another article beside his 'normal' reportage. These articles consist of a seemingly random selection of slogans, short pamphlet texts, captions from murals, written declarations and so on. This patchwork of quotes is accompanied only by a short introductory paragraph in which Nootboom explains the reasons behind his article:

Who spends these days and weeks in Paris is besieged by words, spoken and written. Words from this time and from the other revolutionary moments that France, and with France Europe, has known, 1789, 1848, 1871. [...] Together it [the collage of quotes, FH] has to render an impression of the arena in which onlookers swirl round, but whose actors know perfectly well what they are doing. It is only one hundredth, maybe even one thousandth what I have here. *I am deliberately conveying it as chaotic as reaches me hour after hour* [my italics, FH].<sup>95</sup>

Nootboom attempts to provide the experience of the chaotic (over)flow of information during the Parisian revolt. Such a form, which can be seen in the following picture, is highly atypical for journalism, which has always attempted to structure chaotic reality into a linearly structured article (Illustration 9.10). These articles are therefore clear-cut examples of the discursive freedom Nootboom enjoys.

<sup>94</sup> Cees Nootboom, "Adieu," *de Volkskrant*, May 30, 1968.

<sup>95</sup> Cees Nootboom, "De papieren revolutie," *de Volkskrant*, June 8, 1968.



Still, beside his apparent enthusiasm for the protests, he also overtly struggles with questions concerning their lasting impact on society and their position within history; for an important part Nootboom's reportage series revolves around the search for answers to these fundamental questions. On the one hand his positive attitude towards the protesters incites a certain confidence about the outcome in Nootboom. After he has first laid eyes on the enormous crowd that went into the streets to protest against the authorities Nootboom, strongly impressed by the revolutionary atmosphere, states with quite some certainty: "What its significance will be I cannot judge. But means the definitive end of an era, and that doesn't only apply to France."<sup>97</sup> He might not be able to predict the exact historical meaning of the revolt, but he is certain it means the end of an era; in his mind and in those of the other protesters President De Gaulle has already resigned.

On the other hand, when De Gaulle makes clear in his speech that he will not resign Nootboom admits how overly rash these conclusions have been. In his reflection on the events he points to the uncertainties of such a far reaching interpretation of the events and to the opacity of historical reality in general.

I bend over and see that the pamphlet talks about the commune of 1871 and suddenly realize how odd it is that the former French revolutions seems more real than what is happening now; that Thiers is easier imaginable than De Gaulle and I wonder whether that is because of the thin atmosphere of anticipation that is still present everywhere. An allegorical representation is painted above the podium with bodies of mythical and naked skin and with those annoying women from the 1880s with a harp, who probably have to depict Hope and who with a slow pace are directly walking towards the rising sun. I notice that I am beat and go outside. It is pouring on the empty courtyard, on the bannisters and on the portrait of Trotsky, on the columns, the stairs and the flags.<sup>98</sup>

This quote links up to Nootboom's earlier cited statement about the way historical events are generally presented as a closed off and unequivocal event. By showing the difficulties he has in interpreting the events, Nootboom implicitly undercuts the idea that such a monolithic representation of reality is possible. In the other reportages Nootboom goes back and forth between committed conviction and reflective doubt; between hope and the fear of disillusion. In the following quote he connects the strong hopes for a reshaped society that the horrors of the Second World War had fostered to the upheaval in Paris and warns for the societal implications if this protest proves nothing more than idle hope.

One thing is certain: if nothing more is done than a few academic reforms, and some other material improvements for the workers, if the structures of this society that swimming around in its own dirty bath water aren't really changed, an entire generation will be left behind with the biggest moral hangover possible for a *surviving* [Nootboom's italics, FH] generation, but what am I saying, hangover, it will be a monster of broken zeal, of crippled idealism. A monster that one in entirely different forms will present a beastly bill of destroyed hope.<sup>99</sup>

Ultimately, this example demonstrates the high expectations of the Parisian revolt, the difficulties and complexity of the interpretation of such events, and the influence a subjective perspective can

<sup>97</sup> Cees Nootboom, "1968?"

<sup>98</sup> Cees Nootboom, "De revolutie wacht," *de Volkskrant*, June 6, 1968.

<sup>99</sup> Cees Nootboom, "Sorbonne," *de Volkskrant*, June 1, 1968.

have on this interpretation.

Nooteboom's reportages are thus clearly of a different nature than the accounts of Clos or Hargrove. His personal approach to the events, his explicit commitment to the cause of the protesters, the occasionally unorthodox composition to convey the experience, and the dominance of his philosophic reflection, in which he implicitly shows the complexity of the events, show the discursive freedom he had in his accounts and how far his pieces are removed from mainstream reporting. They suggest a strong orientation on literary discourse. This was recognized by the members of the jury who - although not unanimously - awarded him with the prize for daily newspaper journalism in 1969.<sup>100</sup> The jury report of the award he won for these articles emphasizes his ability to intuitively capture the drama of the event on the emotional level through his superb writing style.

It is in that sense characteristic that he has acknowledged meaningful details as such and that he due to his stylistic skills knows how to superbly convey the inner drama of events and situations. Nooteboom's writing style is impressionistic. But what he depicts in seemingly arbitrary, actually accurate, strokes is usually the essential. By evocative wording and direct expression he penetrates the deeper layers of the context and causes, with the result that he not only describes, but also interprets. Because his style is rife with imagery and emotion, he allows his gripped readers to directly experience the events.<sup>101</sup>

Yet, this way of reporting had implications for his position within journalism. Instead of operating in the center of journalism discourse like the *grand reporters* and providing journalism with a professional ideal, such accounts had become an appreciated exception moving closer to the margins of journalism discourse. The jury also acknowledged this different position by contending that it was easier for Nooteboom to excel in his accounts, because *de Volkskrant* published them as columns. This allowed him to make a more personal selection of the events and allowed him more discursive freedom than most reporters.<sup>102</sup> Nooteboom himself was also aware of the deviant status of his type of journalism. He never considered his reportages as typical for journalism, but rather emphasized the different approach of his accounts.

The word flipside has been abused so often already - let's say that I have always looked for the side, the bottom and the frays of the events. I literally have cross perspective. At a certain moment in time events are canonized, they become part of the history books and seem coherent and final, but in reality they have never been like that.<sup>103</sup>

He thus admits - cultivates even - that his journalistic work is somewhat out of the ordinary and sets himself apart from 'mainstream' journalism.

Nooteboom clearly did not fit this professional profile, nor did he put in any effort to position himself in that way. As a well-known novelist he could not afford to position himself too close to professional journalism, for that could cost him literary prestige. Although literary discourse changed in the sixties, and left its ivory tower focused on fiction to get inspired by reality, everyday journalism

<sup>100</sup> Van Vree, *Metamorfose van een dagblad*, 115.

<sup>101</sup> "Prijs voor de dagbladjournalistiek. Rapport van de jury." [Unpublished jury report of 1969 from the archives of the Dutch press museum].

<sup>102</sup> "Prijs voor de dagbladjournalistiek. Rapport van de jury."

<sup>103</sup> Piet Piryns, "Cees Nooteboom: 'Ik ben bang dat het niet zo duidelijk aan mij te zien is, maar in mijn geheime hart ben ik natuurlijk een anarchist,'" in *Over Cees Nooteboom. Beschouwingen en interviews*, ed. Daan Cartens (Den Haag: BZZZTöH, 1994), 211.

was still considered to be at odds with the creativity and artistic autonomy an artist needed to have.<sup>104</sup>

## Conclusion

In the process of the professionalization of journalism, the emphasis of journalism's legitimacy within society had come to revolve around the idea of being an independent, detached and neutral recorder of reality. In spite of the rise of critical culture in the 1960s, journalism and certainly the large national newspapers adopted the professional ethic of the objectivity regime. New Journalism only played a marginal role. Objectivity within journalism practice entailed the disconnection of information and experience, showing the growing objectification of the event that was reported. In order to achieve such an a-perspectival presentation the accounts are depersonalized and the mediating subjectivity of the reporter was abandoned. The presence of the reporter needed to be effaced. For that reason, the reportages are written in a terse style, in which the focus is on the chain of events. In general the role of commentator and witness is passed on to the sources that are quoted, emphasizing the transparency and accountability of the article.

The depersonalization challenges the reportage's ability to portray the atmosphere and convey an experience. However, by the use of characteristic anecdote-like descriptions, a succession of short impressions to build up some tension, and by the extensive representation of discussion and dialogue at certain important moments in the event the reporters still manage to provide the reader with a vicarious experience by transferring the more subjective elements to the sources they consulted. Moreover, the lack of evocative descriptions and expressive imagery was compensated by the increasing use of pictures. In general, these pictures seem to have partially assumed the function of conveying the atmosphere of an event. This is understandable as these pictures gave the reader the sense that reality is captured candidly. Moreover, they also seemed to lack a point of view, which complied with the ideal of an objective portrayal of reality.

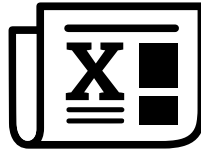
Still, it is important to acknowledge that certain developments challenged the adherence to the objectivity regime and that a more personal way of reporting never disappeared entirely. The reportages by Max Clos and Charles Hargrove show how the growing individual prestige of certain reporters could earn them some more liberties in the way they wrote their stories. Yet, for the most part their reportages were in line with the constraints of the objectivity regime. Only Nootboom's accounts are reminiscent of the tradition of the *grand reporter*, but this had clear consequences for his position within journalistic discourse. In spite the fact that he was awarded an important journalistic prize, showing that his personal approach and a literary style was certainly valorized, his accounts were identified as columns and set off from the mainstream reportages in the newspaper. Subsequently, Nootboom was not considered a professional journalist, but someone who because of his literary skills and status could offer an interesting additional perspective on reality - a role that inspired several literary authors in this period. In the following decades after the sixties the objectivity regime as professional framework would reach its peak and this period has been termed a period of 'high modernism' in journalism. Yet, somewhere between the 1990s and the new millennium this relatively steady professional framework started showing cracks. Under influence of fundamental changes in the press landscape and the rise of a competing postmodern conception of journalism, the subjectivity of the reporter seems to have left the margins of journalism discourse once again.

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<sup>104</sup> Brems, *Altijd weer vogels*, 258-262, 272-277; Jos Buurlage, *Onveranderlijk veranderlijk. Harry Mulisch tussen literatuur, journalistiek, wetenschap en politiek in de jaren zestig en zeventig* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1999), 200-215.







# High modernism and beyond

## New challenges for newspaper journalism 1975 - 2005

### The reign and end of high modernism in journalism

Journalism history in Europe after the 'sixties' encompasses a period that can be characterized as a time of 'high modernism'. This term is coined by Daniel Hallin to describe American journalism between the Second World War up until the 1980s and refers to:

[A]n era when the historically troubled role of the journalist seemed fully rationalized, when it seemed possible for the journalist to be powerful and prosperous and at the same time independent, disinterested, public-spirited, and trusted and beloved by everyone, from the corridors of power around the world to the ordinary citizen and consumer.<sup>1</sup>

It points to the self-evidence of the image of journalism as a pivotal domain in safeguarding a healthy public sphere, which is considered a prerequisite for a properly functioning democratic society.<sup>2</sup>

This ideal typical characterization offers a fruitful framework to describe European journalism between roughly the 1970s and 1990s. The existing scholarship depicts journalism during these years as a cultural domain whose authority was more or less at its peak. Journalism enjoyed more professional esteem and autonomy than ever, and was both commercially and institutionally stable. Most dailies had a solid, sometimes even prosperous, financial position, enabling them to hire a large journalistic staff. Furthermore, the quality dailies had consolidated their position vis-à-vis the popular press. The oppositions underlying this division were clearly delineated and widely accepted. In these respects, the press landscapes in the respective countries were relatively stable compared to the years to come. With the exception of France, in which popular journalism gradually withered away after the 1960s, there was enough room for both quality and popular newspapers to coexist successfully.<sup>3</sup>

From the 1990s onwards a new era was gradually ushered, which fundamentally challenged the stability in all these respects.<sup>4</sup> These developments responsible for this - which are currently still on going - are also considered to have profoundly impacted the discursive characteristics of journalism. With regard to newspaper journalism this shift is generally portrayed as the decline or

<sup>1</sup> Hallin, "Passing of the "high modernism"," 16.

<sup>2</sup> Sparks, "Introduction," 24.

<sup>3</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 401-406, 418-423; Elliot, "Professional ideology," 187-191; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 205-206, 215, 237-239; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 208-212, 240-241; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 359, 364-369; Nico Drok, "Civiele journalistiek. Het belang van de professie voor het publieke domein," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et.al (Amsterdam: AUP, 2002), 376-378.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hallin, "Passing of the "high modernism"," 16; Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology: Changing truth claims in popular and political culture," 60; Jo Bardoel, "Het einde van de journalistiek? Nieuwe verhoudingen tussen professie en publiek," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et.al (Amsterdam: AUP, 2002), 362-367; Sparks, "Introduction," 5-9.

'dumbing down' of quality journalism due to an increasing dominance of the tabloid logic of popular journalism. Such a tabloid logic is considered to be shorthand for a commercialized perspective on journalism, subsequently mainly focusing on profit rather than professional quality. The increasingly dominant commercial logic is considered to make dailies look for the lowest common denominator and brought them on a path towards becoming superficial crowd-pleasers.<sup>5</sup> As a result this rationale is believed to favor superficial sensational or 'soft' news, such as celebrity or lifestyle news, human interest stories or accounts focused on personal experience and emotions, over thorough coverage of 'hard' news concerning politics, foreign affairs and (social-) economic issues. Although the previous chapters have shown the recurring nature of the debate about journalistic quality in relation to the opposition between hard and soft journalism, the concern for the survival of quality journalism has never been felt to be a more urgent problem than in recent years.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, this is a much more complicated discussion than is generally acknowledged. First of all, the debate around the assumed deterioration is influenced by the way the competing dailies have positioned themselves strategically towards each other. *The Times* for instance has been accused of adopting a popular logic by many critics, but has presented itself as a quality daily that is continuously adapting itself to the changes within society.<sup>7</sup> It is thus important to acknowledge the strategic aspects of this debate in which quality dailies have tried to position themselves favorably vis-à-vis their competition.

Journalists and scholars alike are concerned that the reproached characteristics of popular papers will now spread to the quality dailies, consequently affecting the professional standards of journalism. Such a pessimistic assessment is incited by the anxiety about the perceived loss of journalism's role as fourth estate within democracy and its declining ability to portray reality in an independent and detached manner.<sup>8</sup> These critics judge the journalistic developments negatively, and see the changes as part of a more general decay of civil society in general. Within such a 'narrative of decline' every deviation from the professional ideals of the objectivity regime is regarded as a deterioration of journalistic quality or 'tabloidization, in which the opposition between 'hard' and 'soft' news is conflated with good vs. bad journalism.<sup>9</sup> As I will demonstrate, this perspective on the journalistic developments from this moment onwards is rather crude and lacks the necessary refinement for a sound insight in the journalistic developments.

Conversely, scholars, such as Dahlgren, Van Zoonen, Costera Meijer to mention a few, have argued against such a one-dimensional perspective on the recent journalistic developments and take issue with its static, prescriptive and biased outlook on quality standards. Next to the dangers, these scholars argue that the changes can also have positive effects on the democratic role journalism plays. Their open-minded approach to the discursive changes acknowledges the dynamic nature of the journalism standards as part of a continuously changing society. Their perspective on

5 Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn, "Introduction," in *The Tabloid Culture Reader*, ed. Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn (Berkshire/New York: Open University Press, 2008), 1.

6 Schudson, "Please hold still," 191-194.

7 Graham Stewart, *The History of the Times. Volume VII 1981-2002. The Murdoch Years* (London: HarperCollins, 2005), 447-449, 459-478, 619-660.

8 Tulloch, "Eternal Recurrence," 133-135; Sparks, "Introduction," 7; cf. Dahlgren, "Introduction," 7-10.

9 Cf. Bob Franklin, "Newszak: entertainment versus news and information," in *The Tabloid Culture Reader*, ed. Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn (Berkshire/New York: Open University Press, 2008), 13-22; Nick Davies, *Flat Earth News: An Award-winning Reporter Exposes Falsehood, Distortion and Propaganda in the Global Media* (London: Vintage Books, 2009), 20-50; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 231-233; Huub Wijffjes, "Kranten voor de zondvloed? Het krantenlandschap in de Lage Landen anno 2010," *Ons Erfdeel* 53, no. 1 (2010): 46-55; cf. Sam Lehman-Wilzig & Michael Seletzky, "Hard news, soft news, 'general' news: The necessity and utility of an intermediate classification," *Journalism* 11, no.1 (2010): 38-39.

journalism, which is influenced by the research into postmodern society<sup>10</sup> by influential sociologists such as Giddens, Beck and Lash, attributes the recent developments not only to commercial pressures, but also to broader cultural and societal changes. They still uphold ideals concerning quality journalism, but question and challenge the self-evidence of the objectivity regime as the one and only right quality standard. Moreover, they criticize the dichotomous and normative nature of the way quality and popular journalism - and high and low culture in general - are commonly distinguished from each other within this framework.<sup>11</sup>

The conception of journalism and its role in society that is underlying the objectivity regime is considered to be exemplary for modernity and modern society, both of which are characterized by the belief in men's ability to provide a truthful and coherent representation of reality and subsequently their ability to ultimately overcome any problems society is facing. Philosophical and literary postmodernism have contributed to an emerging alternative perspective on knowledge and truth. From that perspective the validity of such encompassing 'grand narratives', which help people to give coherent meaning to the world they live in, can be challenged.<sup>12</sup> Postmodernism has cast doubt on the influential epistemological assumption that a combination of rational inquiry and positivistic methods makes it possible to represent reality in a universally truthful and coherent way. From that perspective it is impossible to find an Archimedean point from which the world can be regarded. Subsequently, every representation is inherently partial and ideologically biased.<sup>13</sup> As I will flesh out further in the next chapter, the theoretical foundations of philosophical and literary postmodernism are an intricate part of postmodern society and culture at large. Consequently, they have influenced each other reciprocally, but cannot be conflated. Postmodern society and culture has been characterized by the growing feelings of uncertainty among its citizens. Scholars attribute this anxiety to the declining trust in the core institutions, such as politics, science and journalism, that determine knowledge production within society. These domains are intricately related and each of them plays a pivotal role in the way society is organized and in its attempts to take care of its citizens with regard to fundamental issues, like individual freedom and autonomy, labor, welfare, safety and income and prosperity.<sup>14</sup>

The emergence of this postmodern society and culture and its consequences should not be regarded as a clean break or shift from the traditional modern framework, as it is not a crystallized reality. As Best and Kellner have formulated it:

[W]e are living between a now-aging modern era and an emerging postmodern era that remains to be adequately conceptualized, charted and mapped. [...] Living in the borderlands between the

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- 10 Cf. Ulrich Beck, "The Reinvention of Politics: Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization," in *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, ed. Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens & Scott Lash (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 24-31; Scott Lash, "Expert-systems or Situated Interpretation? Culture and Institutions in Disorganized Capitalism," in *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, ed. Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens & Scott Lash (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 212-213; Although scholars like Giddens and Beck rather use the term late-modern society than postmodern, I prefer the term postmodern society as it is often used in journalism research and points to its relation to the theoretical foundations of philosophical and literary postmodernism.
  - 11 Dahlgren, "Introduction," 7-19; Irene Costera Meijer, "Naar een goed journaal. Conventionele, populaire en publieke repertoires in de televisiejournalistiek," in *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland*, ed. Jo Bardoel et al. (Amsterdam: AUP, 2002), 391-399; Barbie Zelizer, "Introduction," in *The Changing Faces of Journalism*, ed. Barbie Zelizer (New York: Routledge, 2009), 4-7; cf. Jo Bogaerts & Nico Carpentier, "The postmodern challenge to journalism. Strategies for constructing a trustworthy identity," in *Rethinking Journalism. Trust and participation in a transformed news landscape*, ed. Chris Peters & Marcel Broersma (New York: Routledge, 2013), 67.
  - 12 Cf. Hallin, "Passing of 'high modernism'," 16-24; Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 56-60.
  - 13 It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to give a detailed exposé about philosophical and literary postmodernism, for a more elaborate discussion, cf. Wolfgang Iser, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), 14-17, 31-37, 185-201; Hans Bertens & Theo D'Haen, *Het postmodernisme in de literatuur* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 1988), 11-49.
  - 14 Lash, "Expert-systems," 212-213; Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 8-13, 24-25.

modern and the postmodern means negotiating constant conflicts between the old and the new and confronting perplexing and often disturbing change. Condemned to a seemingly unending state of transition, permanent tension and strife appears to be a defining modality of the between. Moreover, the discourses that strive to describe this condition are also in conflict and at odds with each other, condemning us to unending theory and culture wars with no truce in sight.<sup>15</sup>

The growing doubt of the objectivity regime as trustworthy professional framework to provide truthful representations of the world is indicative for such a transformation into postmodern society. And like the muddiness of that development, the objectivity regime has not immediately been replaced with a full-fledged postmodern journalism practice, but both perspectives on journalism and intermediate ones - as I will illustrate in the next chapter - exist alongside each other in their competition for prominence.

Scholars working in this vein have argued that the developments within journalism should be interpreted as a process in which the professional standards of journalism are being reconceptualized. They point out that the binary opposition between fact and opinion, event and story, and hard news and soft news that underlie the objectivity regime are untenable within a postmodern epistemological framework. In the eyes of these scholars deviations from the objectivity regime, which are in part also infused by the aim to attract a broader audience, cannot only be attributed to a commercial logic. Such developments should be seen as an interaction between commercial demands and changing cultural ideas about the way our society is organized and about what constitutes trustworthy and newsworthy information that benefits citizens within democratic society.

In their opinion, there are no intrinsic differences between the discursive characteristics of quality and popular journalism, and they therefore object to the equation of techniques typical for popular journalism with the lack of quality. This is not to say that these scholars reject the difference in quality between popular and quality journalism altogether, but they accept that the standards are the result of an ongoing social negotiation. Apart from differences in topical focus, they see the same potential danger of superficial coverage or a lack of credible reporting within quality and popular journalism. This is why they refute the argument that any deviation from the objectivity regime is a self-evident sign of the dumbing down of journalism.<sup>16</sup>

Rather, they argue that the changing circumstances in the recent years were accompanied by the emergence of a new perspective on journalistic quality standards and by a reconceptualization of the way journalism can fulfill its democratic role within society. From this perspective, the assumed incorporation by quality dailies of certain characteristics that are considered typical for popular journalism can also be regarded as a necessary attempt to reengage the fragmented public with democracy. In that sense these scholars acknowledge that quality journalism is in a process of redefinition - to which they contribute actively.

Thus, although the opposing perspectives I have just discussed discern similar developments within journalism and acknowledge the importance of safeguarding quality journalism, they offer

<sup>15</sup> Steven Best & Douglas Kellner, *The postmodern turn* (London: The Guilford Press, 1997), 31.

<sup>16</sup> Dahlgren, "Introduction," 7-14; Martin Conboy, "The Popular Press: Surviving Postmodernity," in *The Tabloid Culture Reader*, ed. Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn (New York: Open University Press, 2008), 45-50; Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 60; S. Elizabeth Bird, "Storytelling on the Far Side: Journalism and the Weekly Tabloid," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 7, no.4 (1990): 378-386; S. Elizabeth Bird, "Tabloidization: What is it, and Does it Really Matter?," in *The Changing Faces of Journalism. Tabloidization, Technology and Truthiness*, ed. Barbie Zelizer (New York: Routledge, 2009), 42-46; James Ettema, "The Moment of Truthiness: The Right Time to Consider the Meaning of Truthfulness," in *The Changing Faces of Journalism. Tabloidization, Technology and Truthiness*, ed. Barbie Zelizer (New York: Routledge, 2009), 117-125; Steen Steensen, "The Featurization of Journalism," *Nordicom Review* 32, no.2 (2011): 50, 57-60; Drok, "Civiele journalistiek," 376-380.

strongly diverging perspectives on the issue. The latter acknowledges the complexity of the recent developments and allows for a much more open-minded approach, which in my opinion leads to a more fruitful and nuanced analysis. To do justice to this complexity on the level of the journalistic text, I use the notion of 'featurized journalism' to replace the crude and pejorative concept of tabloidization. The term, which builds on Steensen's notion of 'featurization', is derived from the genre concept of the 'feature' - a form of background story focusing on the level of the experience.<sup>17</sup> Featurized journalism refers to the same phenomena as tabloidization, but acknowledges the multifaceted origin of the developments instead of ascribing it only to a commercial logic. For that reason, it does much more justice to the different ways in which the recent developments have manifested themselves discursively and discerns between different journalistic characteristics that play a role in the recent debates about journalistic quality. I will discuss these characteristic more elaborately in the following section, but in general it can be said that featurized journalism challenges the self-evidence of the journalistic standards of high modernism. Ultimately it questions the affordances of the objectivity regime that underlie the distinction between popular and quality journalism by showing the entwinement between event and story, information and entertainment, between fact and value, public and private, and description and commentary.<sup>18</sup>

Refining the debate on a conceptual level already sheds a more nuanced light on the recent developments. Nevertheless, it is only a necessary first step in the right direction, for the discussion about the developments in journalism in the last few decades is severely impaired by a lack of cross-national and longitudinal empirical data. The existing research mostly focuses on developments on the institutional and professional level, but seldom goes into the ways the editorial content is actually affected.<sup>19</sup> This chapter therefore entails a general inquiry into different textual characteristics, adding to the foundation on which the debate about journalism can be based. Nevertheless, more research is needed to flesh out the developments further. My results suggest that the changes within the quality dailies are certainly not uniform, but differ per country and per daily. Whereas some dailies have drawn closer to a popular profile, others stuck to the typical characteristics of quality dailies as they were established after World War II.

## Forms of featurized journalism

The debate about the recent journalistic developments is thus intricately related to the end of a period of high modernism in journalism. Yet, as mentioned the emphasis on commercialization as the main cause drowns out the importance of cultural and political factors in this context. The explanation that Hallin offers for the end of that period acknowledges the interplay of different causes and also holds for the changes the European press has been experiencing. Firstly, the intensification of commercial competition has put great pressure on newspaper journalism. The newspaper business had to deal with the proliferation of (news) media outlets, which has intensified the competition within the media landscape. Television has become ubiquitous with a large choice of different channels, which all have their own news programs. Furthermore, the introduction of 'free sheets', and the rise of the internet, which by the end of the millennium had led to news websites, has also provided free news

17 Steensen introduced this term to argue that this such a form of reporting has become increasingly popular within the newspapers over the years, cf. Steensen, "Featurization," 49-51.

18 Cf. Dahlgren, "Introduction," 7-16; Steensen, "Featurization," 50; Bird, "Tabloidization," 40-46; Ettema, "Moment of Truthiness," 117-123.

19 Frank Esser, "Editorial Structures and Work Principles in British and German Newsrooms," *European Journal of Communication* 13, no.3 (1999): 375-405; Kees Brants, "Who is afraid of infotainment?," *European Journal of Communication* 13, no.3 (1998): 321.

and has started to erode the idea that news was a commodity. All these contenders together have been fighting over advertisement and the attention of the public. This competition has made the paid dailies vulnerable and they are increasingly struggling to survive. This proliferation of media outlets went hand in hand with a further concentration of ownership in order to cut costs and maximize profitability. For these large media conglomerates journalism is no longer a goal in itself, but a means to an end in creating a profitable business. The quality press was the first to suffer from these new developments. In their effort to adhere to the quality standards they invest the most in reporting focused on in their eyes important, but generally less popular issues. For that reason their profit margins are generally smaller than that of the popular press.

Secondly, Hallin points to what he calls 'the collapse of political consensus', referring to a broad cultural change revolving around declining civic engagement, declining authority of institutional politics, and increasing doubts about journalism's ability to provide a truthful representation of reality. Thus, the cultural authority of journalism as a profession has been declining. This links up to the emergence of postmodern society and culture, in which the growing feeling of uncertainty has infused doubts about the ways the privileged knowledge domains depict reality and attempt to uncover the truth.<sup>20</sup> As I will discuss more in detail in the following chapter, this growing concern about the dominant epistemological procedures have also impacted journalism practice.

The changing commercial and cultural circumstances have first and foremost affected the quality press, as they generally have a weaker commercial foundation and are considered to adhere more strictly to the objectivity regime than the popular press. The recent developments have triggered the need to find new ways of convincing their audience of their cultural authority, while safeguarding or reestablishing their attraction to the readership and advertisers. Their subsequent search and development is what incited the intense and ongoing debate about the standards journalism has to live up to. Yet, as Esser has pointed out, the concept of tabloidization assumes a linear and uniform development, which is almost by default considered to result in a more superficial journalism practice. Following Esser's critique on this limited perspective, the concept of featurized journalism rejects such rigidity. Instead it regards the discursive developments within journalism as an open-ended process, determined by the intricate interaction between the changing commercial circumstances and encompassing cultural developments. Depending on the specific cultural context and the particular profile and position of the media outlet in question, these changing circumstances can have divergent results. This means that featurized journalism might become more prominent in one country or within a certain quality paper, whereas it does not manifest itself as strongly in other countries or dailies. Moreover, the forms in which featurized journalism manifests, could differ as well.<sup>21</sup>

For that reason it is important to distinguish between the different discursive dimensions that can play a role in the way dailies might have implemented forms of featurized journalism. Whereas 'tabloidization' too often becomes a container term by conflating different phenomena under the umbrella of 'soft' news, 'featurized journalism' acknowledges the nuances of the developments in the last decades. It therefore discerns three different characteristics, which are closely related and often, but not necessarily accompany each other. This distinction is based on research by Sparks and by Reinemann, who have deconstructed the opposition between hard and soft news into a topic,

<sup>20</sup> Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 8-13, 24-31; Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 57-60, 64-65.

<sup>21</sup> Esser, "Tabloidization of News," 293-294; In a similar vein, Nick Couldry fleshed out a similar critique on the notion of 'mediatization' that is elucidating, cf. Nick Couldry, "Mediatization or mediation? Alternative understandings of the emergent space of digital storytelling," *New Media Society* 10, no.3 (2008): 376-378.

focus and a style dimension.<sup>22</sup> Based on these dimensions I have discerned three basic characteristics of featurized journalism. Featurized journalism firstly encompasses articles with a strong focus on sports, celebrity news, lifestyle and human interest instead of on politics, foreign affairs and (social-) economic information, and news about (civil) society (topic dimension). Secondly, it also entails accounts that adopt a human interest angle. Journalists approach the news by considering the impact it has on the private lives of ordinary people, who have no authority or specific knowledge with regard to a certain topic (focus dimension). Finally, featurized journalism also refers to accounts in which storytelling techniques, like colorful writing, a first-person perspective, personal characterization by conveying personal experiences and emotions, instead of drawing on textual conventions that provide rational and detached information (style dimension). In addition, these dimensions not only manifest within the written text, but they are also visible in the visual appearance of dailies.

Steensen, Bird, Ettema and Greenberg focus on the third dimension - which is the main theme of the following chapter. They argue that the quality potential of such forms of journalism is not acknowledged and has not been scrutinized properly yet. Instead, because such accounts are rooted in the tradition of storytelling and its focus on personal experiences and emotions of the sources or the journalists themselves, they are conflated under the umbrella of tabloidization and assumed to be one-sided, biased, and unverified irrational representations of reality. Yet, according to these scholars, the fact that this form of journalism challenges the separation of factual information and personal experience and accepts the inherent subjectivity and partiality of every representation of reality, cannot be automatically equated with low quality. In their eyes the objective journalism can just as easily lead to “shallow he said/she said reporting”, in which actual truth verification is replaced with merely reproducing what others have said, whereas this form of featurized journalism can just as well offer in-depth and well-researched accounts.<sup>23</sup> For these reasons, I will only use the term ‘tabloidization’ - like above - in its derogative meaning to point out how certain journalistic developments have been valued negatively. The actual description of the development of journalism in relation to the changing media landscape and society at large is structured by the much more nuanced concept of featurized journalism. Looking at the visual style of the dailies, their topical focus, choice of genre and their use of sources can shed light on the way journalism has developed with regard to the three dimensions of this notion. In this chapter these issues are explored quantitatively, but the next chapter provides a more in-depth qualitative analysis, in which particularly the use of storytelling techniques plays a central role.<sup>24</sup>

## Press concentration and rationalization

Although the critics of the recent developments in the press have emphasized the underlying commercial and institutional changes within the press landscape, their role as prime catalyst can be questioned. I will therefore discuss these circumstances in some detail. By pointing out the differences in the institutional contexts of the respective countries, I will build an argument that nuances the influence of the commercial logic on the discursive changes in the period at hand. The challenges journalism was facing from the 1990s onward are often considered to have their roots

22 Cf. Carsten Reinemann et.al, “Hard and soft news: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings,” *Journalism* 13, no.2 (2012): 222-228; Sparks, “Introduction,” 10-11.

23 Susan Greenberg, “Personal experience, turned outward: responses to alienated subjectivity,” *Free Associations* 12, no.2 (2011): 153-156; Bird, “Storytelling on the Far Side,” 379-385; Steensen, “The Featurization of Journalism,” 49-61; Ettema, “Moment of Truthiness,” 117-123.

24 Cf. Reinemann, “Hard and soft news,” 232-234.



in the decades before the period of high modernism came to an end. In this period the institutional conditions and commercial rationale that brought about its collapse were created.<sup>25</sup>

As I have discussed in my previous chapters, the newspaper market had already become more concentrated in the 1960s and 1970s. However, the fusions and the establishment of large media concerns in the late 1980s and early 1990s meant a press concentration on an even larger scale. Such developments manifested itself the strongest in Great Britain, but also influenced the press landscape in the Netherlands and France. Several factors contributed to the growing feeling of newspaper owners that concentration was necessary. Beside the remaining differences between the countries, they all experienced a decline in general diffusion of newspapers within a country from the 1980s onward (Table 10a). This decline is an indication that commercial future of the newspaper business was slowly becoming less bright. Yet, it would take quite some time before the situation would really become dire for the national press. In Britain it did contribute to an increasingly cutthroat competition between the dailies. The profitability of the dailies in all the countries was also influenced considerably by the growing production costs. Newspaper businesses spent a large part of their revenues on the salaries of the supporting staff that worked in the well-manned newspaper factories.<sup>26</sup> Britain also had to deal with a slumping advertisement market, because of the general economic adversity in the 1970s and 1980s, also raising the price of newsprint rapidly.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the British dailies also experienced much more competition from commercial television in this respect, which was not yet allowed in the other two countries until half way the 1980s.<sup>28</sup>

Table 10a<sup>29</sup>

General circulation per 1000 inhabitants	1970	1979	1990	2000	2005
<i>Great Britain</i>	463	426	393	383	335
<i>The Netherlands</i>	320	326	308	273	237*
<i>France</i>	238	196	155	180	156

\*based on the numbers of 2003

Together these circumstances brought about an extensive press concentration, in which particularly in Britain the national dailies came in hands of a few multinational conglomerates. Within the Dutch and French press these processes of concentration and rationalization gained momentum somewhat later and were not as sweeping as in Britain. Still, by the second half of the 1990s the Dutch press was also mainly controlled by three large media concerns (Wegener, De Telegraaf, and PCM Uitgevers). In France, the government played an important part in that latter respect, because it tried to curtail the development towards conglomeration through its particular media legislation. A notorious attempt to regulate and limit concentration is the law that was adopted in 1984, dubbed the ‘anti-Hersant law’, because it was clearly aimed to curtail the rapid expansion of the Hersant Group of

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 423; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 215-217, 221-223.

<sup>26</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 213-214.

<sup>27</sup> Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 110.

<sup>28</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 181; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 332; Kuhn, *Media in France*, 46-47.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Kuhn, *Media in France*, 28; Kuhn, *The Media in Contemporary France*, 39; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 559; Van de Plasse & Verbei, *Kroniek*, 202.

which *Le Figaro* was part.<sup>30</sup> Yet, the role of the government should not be overemphasized as media conglomerates such as The Hersant Group or Bayard Presse Group, which owned *La Croix*, became larger and larger throughout the 1980s and 1990s and started to operate internationally.<sup>31</sup>

The concentration of the press had important institutional consequences, which are often mentioned by journalists and scholars as an important influence on the discursive characteristics of the dailies. Especially within the British press, having the strongest market orientation, concentration was feared to negatively affect the journalistic quality of the dailies. Williams for instance shows that the sources of income of these companies had expanded beyond the newspaper business, which impacted the rationale behind the newspaper business considerably. According to him, newspapers were becoming more and more a means to a commercial and sometimes political end for some of these British conglomerates; commercial considerations started to determine editorial choices in a way that professional quality standards became a secondary issue.<sup>32</sup>

The person who is often accused of being the embodiment of this new philosophy is News Corp owner Rupert Murdoch.<sup>33</sup> Murdoch gained notoriety as a media tycoon when he purchased the waning *Sun* in 1969 and made it into a commercial success selling around 2.5 million copies a day. Press historians have shown how *The Sun* took the tabloid logic to a new level by focusing on emotional stories, entertainment, gossip and sex; the daily became famous for its topless page three girl. It competed directly with *Daily Mirror*, which quickly lost readership as it was less explicitly geared towards the content *The Sun* thrived on. Indirectly, this competition also affected the mid-market newspapers and these two dailies also attracted parts of the target audience of the *Mail*, which was slumping throughout the 1970s until it was finally reformatted at the end of this decade.<sup>34</sup> The success of *The Sun* earned Murdoch the reputation of a ruthless businessman who cares for profit rather than providing journalistic quality.

Yet, the worries about the influence of these new media conglomerates on the dominant journalistic standards were only really triggered when Murdoch also bought the struggling but still highly esteemed *Times* in 1981.<sup>35</sup> In the latest volume of the history of *The Times* Stewart argues that his image as an unscrupulous businessman was strongly reinforced by the fact that Murdoch's purchase of *The Times* ushered in a period in which the newspaper business was rationalized commercially by implementing a cutthroat strategy of cost reduction. In the 1980s the availability of new technology such as computers and digital typesetting made it possible to simplify the printing process of a daily and produce it in a much more efficient way. Murdoch subsequently severely reduced the supporting personnel, which led to heavy resistance from the powerful printers unions. In 1986, after several strikes, he broke their influential position by relocating the production line of his newspaper industry from Fleet Street to a modernized 'factory' in Wapping in East-London, which was manned by workers from the electricians union who were willing to work for lower salaries.<sup>36</sup> By 1987 his international media conglomerate owned one out of every three British newspapers, making Murdoch one of the most influential - as well as despised - media moguls in Britain. His promise that *The Times* would not alter its journalistic course met with great suspicion and every change in the editorial content has been put under a microscope by critics and almost automatically

30 Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 227-228; cf. Groupe Bayard, "Histoire" [Consultable at: [www.groupebayard.com/index.php/fr/articles/rubrique/art/10](http://www.groupebayard.com/index.php/fr/articles/rubrique/art/10) (last accessed 3 July 2013)].

31 Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 369-370; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 230-231.

32 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 210-211.

33 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 211.

34 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 200-203.

35 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 205, 231-233.

36 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 213-215.

considered proof of their fears of tabloidization.<sup>37</sup> To what extent the paper has actually changed its editorial content I will discuss in the following sections, but Murdoch did manage to give a boost to the circulation and the financial situation of a daily that would otherwise have perished (Table 10b).<sup>38</sup>

Table 10b<sup>39</sup>

Circulation numbers (thousands) <sup>2</sup>	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
<i>The Times</i>	388	319	316	478	386*	880	726	686
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	4,570	3,968	3,625	3,033	2,900*	2,442*	2,270	1,748
<i>Daily Mail</i>	1,890	1,726	1,948	1,815	1,675*	2,344*	2,353	2,409
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	108	99	113	178	232	267	266	244
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	411	543	584	705	704	732	781	698
<i>de Volkskrant</i>	190	211	237	271	331	358	343	290
<i>Le Figaro</i> *	430	382	311	433*	423	383	368	327
<i>France-Soir</i> *	792	633*	429*	334*	240	184	150	81*
<i>La Croix</i> *	132*	-	118*	103*	104	97*	90	100

\* The circulation figures of the British papers with a \* next to the figure are not based on information about the 1990 and 1995 but respectively 1992 and 1997; other information was not available. This also goes for the French circulation numbers with a \* from 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2005 are based on figures from respectively 1971, 1981, 1987, 1992, 1997, 1999 and 2002.

In the Netherlands and France, press historians have argued that press concentration was less extensive and the journalistic quality standards maintained their pivotal role for the companies owning the newspapers. The rationalization of the entire production process was also less drastic. In the particular construction of these encompassing corporations, the Dutch dailies were much less at the mercy of their owners than the British dailies.<sup>40</sup> In France these corporations also had to follow much more strict regulations to prevent ruthless commercialism. Moreover, the equivalent of Murdoch, Robert Hersant, was believed to use his newspapers to fulfill his political ambitions, but did not rationalize the newspaper business in the same way as Murdoch. For that reason the mergers met with less suspicion. This was reinforced by the decline of the popular press in France from the 1970s onwards. At the end of that decade the quality press had assumed a commercially dominant position within the French press, especially in comparison to Britain and the Netherlands. This striking difference with the other countries can be ascribed to the interplay of different factors, such as the limiting legislation with regard to commercial expansion, the growing popularity of television, and the strong position of the regional press.<sup>41</sup> These circumstances have been particularly troubling for dailies with a strong market-orientation, like *France-Soir*. To stay afloat financially the paper

<sup>37</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 199-200, 205, 211-212; Stewart, *History of The Times*, 196-203, 624-636.

<sup>38</sup> Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 28-29; Stewart, *History of The Times*, 201-203.

<sup>39</sup> Circulation figures are not easily available and they are therefore based on a variety of sources. In Britain they are based on the figures in: Seymour-Ure, *The British Press*, 28-29; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 203, 225; Stewart, *History of The Times*, 439, 441, and from the Audit Bureau of Circulation (gathered at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_newspapers\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_Kingdom\\_by\\_circulation#Circulation\\_since\\_2000](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_newspapers_in_the_United_Kingdom_by_circulation#Circulation_since_2000)). The Dutch figures are based on: Van de Plasse & Verbeij, *Kroniek*, 196-199 and on the information on the website of Mediamonitor ([www.mediamonitor.nl/mediamarkten/dagbladen/dagbladen-in-2005/#](http://www.mediamonitor.nl/mediamarkten/dagbladen/dagbladen-in-2005/#)). The figures for France are based on: Blandin, *Le Figaro*, 242, 289; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 327, 367; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 242 and Pierre Albert, *La presse française* (Paris: La documentation Française, 2004), 143-145 and Fokke Obbema, "Frankrijk zonder France Soir, het is triest," *Volkskrant.nl*, November 2, 2002: [www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2844/Archief/archief/article/detail/636676/2002/11/02/Frankrijk-zonder-France-Soir-het-is-triest.dhtml](http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2844/Archief/archief/article/detail/636676/2002/11/02/Frankrijk-zonder-France-Soir-het-is-triest.dhtml) (accessed April 3, 2014).

<sup>40</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 420.

<sup>41</sup> Kuhn, *Media in France*, 24-29, 44-47; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 322-335.

needed a massive readership, but from the 1960s onwards its circulation shows a strong decline.<sup>42</sup> Conversely, *Le Figaro*, and to a lesser extent *Le Monde* developed a solid circulation of between 300,000 and 400,000 copies up until the millennium when they also started to lose ground commercially.<sup>43</sup>

According to Wijffes, the press concentration in the 1980s and 1990s demonstrated the benefits of these developments. By sharing many overhead costs the dailies had more financial means to keep track with the technological developments and to reinforce the journalistic profile of the dailies while at the same time creating more opportunities to cater to the wishes of the advertisers. The size of the editorial staff kept increasing in this period and the large national dailies employed between 150 and 250 people in the 1980s. Concentration of ownership is considered to have enabled both the quality dailies *de Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* as well as the popular *Telegraaf* to expand their circulation considerably in the 1980s and early 1990s. As press historians have pointed out, the success of one paper could therefore sometimes enable commercially slumping quality dailies to stay in business and uphold the level of their journalistic work, like *de Volkskrant* has done throughout the 1980s and 1990s for *Het Parool*.<sup>44</sup>

Research thus demonstrates that the process of press concentration in the three countries has been perceived quite differently as measures that were somewhere between ruthlessly safeguarding profits and allowing the journalists to improve or maintain their journalistic standards by ensuring the commercial viability. Although the competition between dailies was becoming stronger, and in Britain even grew into a fierce battle, the newspaper business in the respective countries could in general still accommodate a relatively diverse range of dailies and several of these dailies were very profitable.<sup>45</sup> It has been the rapid changes within the media landscapes in the following period, from roughly halfway the 1990s in Britain and from roughly the new millennium onwards in France and the Netherlands, that are considered to have put the commercial success or viability of the dailies under a growing pressure.

## The proliferation of (new) media and the fragmentation of the public

The growing pressure on the commercial viability of the newspaper business that slowly started to manifest itself around the beginning of the new millennium has two main and intricately related causes: the proliferation of competing new media outlets and the decreasing habit of reading dailies among the younger generations of potential readers, who could choose from this broad and diverse supply of different media outlets and were not particularly attracted to (expensive) dailies. Research has shown that the abundance of news supply on multiple television channels, but also the rise of free sheets and online news around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century gradually changed the news from a commodity to a free service that people, especially the younger generation, assume is at their disposal at any time and any place.<sup>46</sup>

From the 1960s onwards the rise of the television was drawing a growing bill on the newspaper

<sup>42</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 242; Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 166.

<sup>43</sup> Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 146, 158-159, 161-163; Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 208-215.

<sup>44</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 419-421; Joost Ramaer, *De geldpers. De teloorgang van het mediaconcern PCM* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2010), 52-54, 82.

<sup>45</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 421; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 204-206, 230; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 364-369.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 239-241; Chris Peters and Marcel Broersma, "Introduction: Rethinking journalism: the structural transformation of a public good," in *Rethinking journalism. Trust and participation in a transformed news landscape*, ed. Chris Peters & Marcel Broersma (New York: Routledge, 2013), 4-11; Irene Costera Meijer, "The paradox of popularity. How young people experience the news," *Journalism Studies* 8, no.1 (2007): 112-113; Bardoel, "Einde van de journalistiek?," 358-359.

business. Television grew out to be the dominant news medium as the quality and diversity of the programs increased and as it was much cheaper than a newspaper. Its sense of visual immediacy in combination with the supply of entertainment television offered had a strong attraction on the public and kept on attracting more and more people that in turn abandoned their traditional daily newspaper. Scholars have shown that after the state monopoly was abolished in France and the Netherlands in respectively 1982 and 1992 (although in the Netherlands *RTL Véronique* had found a loophole and already broadcasted from Luxembourg in 1989), commercial television developed rapidly. Subsequently, the choice in channels and programs increased rapidly. This has only increased with the introduction of digital television, which led to an explosion of channels and programs that are globally available, part of which focused on the tastes of certain niche groups. Because of its growing market share and the specialized channels, television became even more dominant on the advertisement market as it could reach both a very broad audience as well as target a more specific group of viewers.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to the competition of television, the impact of the internet on the press has become palpable from the 2000s onwards - which has only increased with the introduction of portable devices with internet, such as smart phones and tablets. Together with the free sheets emerging online news outlets, such as newsgroups, aggregation sites, personal wegblogs and full-fledged online-only news initiatives, provided the news free of charge. In response, established dailies also started experimenting with news sites, but as research has pointed out they were reluctant and therefore relatively late with their online initiatives.<sup>48</sup> National dailies acknowledged the added value and new opportunities accompanying the new technology, but in practice the process of finding and successfully implementing a multimedia or cross-media strategy proved difficult. Dailies initially mainly used their websites to publish an online duplicate of the paper version of the daily or to showcase its highlights as some kind of teasers to appeal to the audience and persuade them to buy the paper version.<sup>49</sup>

These new platforms not only competed for readership, but also were increasingly drawing advertisers away from the dailies - on top of the already fierce competition from (commercial) television. The quality dailies, relying the strongest on advertisement revenues due to their relatively low circulation, started to notice this competition in their advertisement revenues. The French quality dailies were hit hard by these developments, whereas the Dutch and British dailies could maintain their profitability for several years.<sup>50</sup> This difference is illustrated by the rise of the supplements in this period within the respective quality dailies. The introduction of more supplements is related to interaction between providing their readers a greater diversity in stories and creating more space for advertisement. In addition, companies could target a more specific audience by advertising in topically delineated supplements.<sup>51</sup> Only in France such supplements did not really catch on. In comparison to their Dutch and British counterparts, the French editions showed much less fluctuations between weekdays. This suggests that on a daily basis the papers anticipated somewhat less on the working patterns and specific interests of their readership. *Le Figaro* did however introduce several additional magazines with its paper. Already in 1978 *Le Figaro Magazine* was introduced as a weekly addition

<sup>47</sup> Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 425-426; Huub Wijffjes, "Nieuwe wegen voor de publieke omroep in Vlaanderen en Nederland," *Ons erfdeel* 49, no.3 (2006): 330-333; Martin, *Médias et journalistes*, 349-356; Kuhn, *Media in Contemporary France*, 42, 48-51.

<sup>48</sup> Ramaer, *De geldpers*, 115-125; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 239-241; Rémy Rieffel, "L'évolution des pratiques journalistiques," in *Journalisme 2.0*, ed. Rémy le Champion (Paris: La Documentation française, 2012), 31-32.

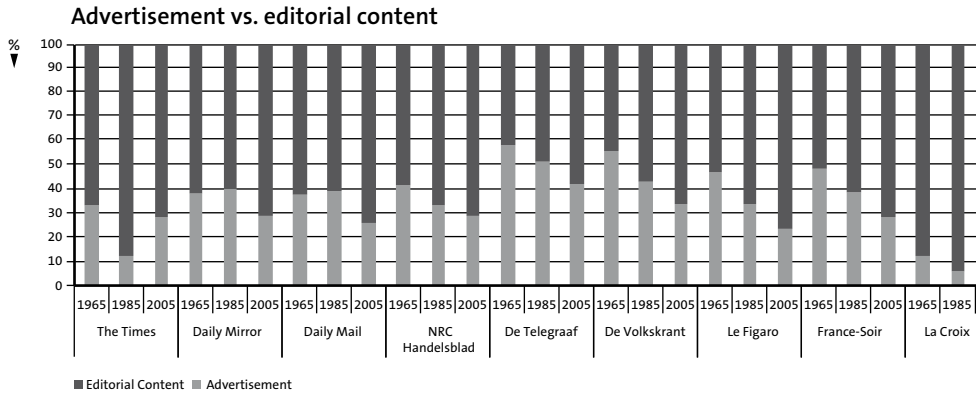
<sup>49</sup> Klaske Tameling and Marcel Broersma, "Crossmediale dilemma's. De zoektocht naar convergentie bij Nederlandse nieuwsmidia," *Tijdschrift voor communicatiewetenschap* 40, no.3 (2012): 232-235.

<sup>50</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 225-231; Ramaer, *De geldpers*, 18-19, 132-136; Kuhn, *Media in contemporary France*, 43.

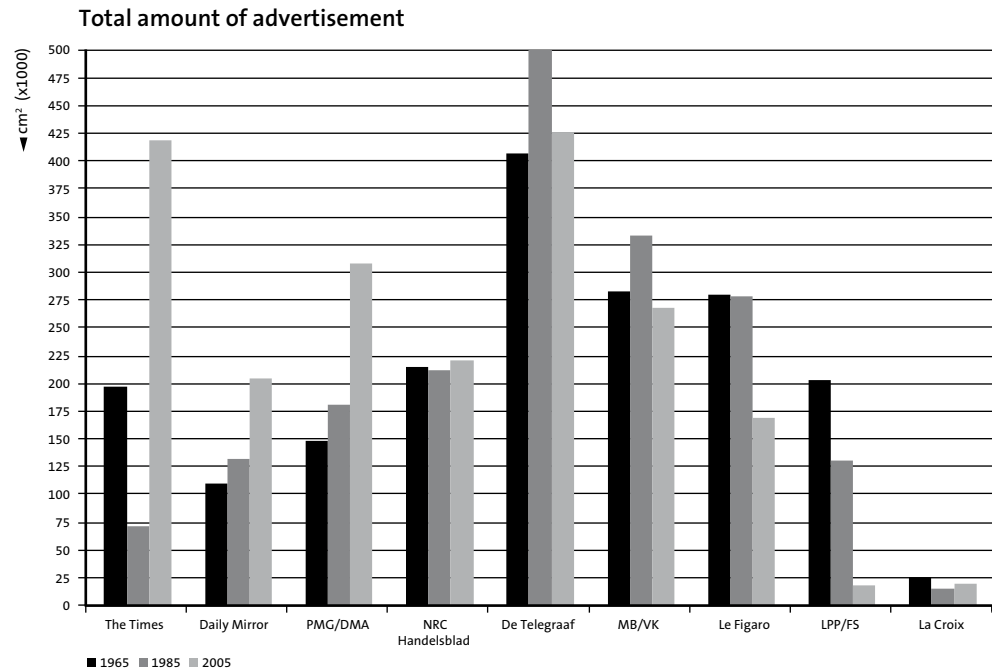
<sup>51</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 230-231; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 421-423.

to the paper on Saturday and in 1980 *Madame Figaro* was introduced as a monthly and from 1994 a weekly magazine. That the day-to-day supplements in the paper did not catch on can be attributed to the lower degree of commercialization and the lower supply of advertising could also point to a lacking commercial trigger to incorporate such sections.<sup>52</sup>

Graph 10.1



Graph 10.2



This image is supported by my data (Graphs 10.1 & 10.2). In absolute numbers the British dailies saw their amount of advertisement rise. *The Times* even showed a considerable growth in the amount of

52 Blandin, *Le Figaro*, 262-271; cf. Kuhn, *Media in Contemporary France*, 43.

advertisement in relative numbers as well. The latter can in part be explained by the appeal of the paper's changing editorial line, I will discuss further on in this chapter, to a larger, but still affluent target audience that attracted advertisers. Advertisement within the Dutch dailies remained steady or experienced a modest decline between 1985 and 2005. Yet, the French newspapers really saw the advertisement diminish severely - with the exception of *La Croix* that hardly published any advertisement to begin with. The fact that *Le Figaro* has been by far the most successful daily with regard to attracting advertisers in comparison to *France-Soir* supports the prominence of the quality dailies in the French press.

Especially the younger generation of media users changed their consumption habits because of the abundance of media platforms and the growing supply of (free) news. Research has shown that from the 1980s on onwards, people not only started to spend more time behind the television, they also switched more often between channels and programs.<sup>53</sup> They have thus become highly selective in their media use and only read, watch or listen to things of their interest. Subsequently, the overwhelming supply of (specialized) media content from which viewers could take its pick this meant an increasing fragmentation of the public.<sup>54</sup> Audience research shows that this has especially affected the newspaper business as people were devoting less and less time to reading a paper and in general they were less inclined to read a newspaper on a regular basis.<sup>55</sup>

Moreover, according to several scholars this combination of an increasing commercialization and competition, the proliferation of media in general and the changing preferences and news consumption patterns of the public have negatively affected the level of trust people assigned to the media and the press in particular.<sup>56</sup> It indeed seems that the institutional and commercial developments have contributed to the idea that media no longer honor their professional values. This becomes clearly manifest in the fear of tabloidization of the quality press, and the subsequent decline of a pluriform press landscape in particularly Britain and the Netherlands.<sup>57</sup> In France the situation is somewhat different. The French press faced similar problems and the discussion about the quality of journalism was and is certainly present within journalism discourse. Still, the decline of the popular press from the 1970s onwards and the subsequent dominance of the quality dailies have made the fear of tabloidization a less central element of the discussion about the future of newspaper journalism. This might be related to the weak position of the popular press, due to the lower degree of commercialization. Subsequently, the threat of increasing tabloid logic seems to be a less prominent issue in France.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, politics has also remained a highly important topic, and as such there is not much fear that dailies will lose the attention for such serious topics. Within French journalism the

53 Williams, *Get me a murder a day!*, 237-240; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 435-436; Kuhn, *Media in Contemporary France*, 47-52.

54 James Webster and Thomas Ksiazek, "The Dynamics of Audience Fragmentation: Public Attention in an Age of Digital Media," *Journal of Communication* 62, no.1 (2012): 39-40.

55 Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 435-436; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 224-225.

56 Although longitudinal research into the levels of trust in the media do not unequivocally support these fluctuations in trust and these number do not distinguish between the different profiles of specific media outlets, several scholars suggest a deterioration in the levels of trust in the media, cf. Peter Golding, Helena Sousa & Liesbet van Zoonen, "Trust and the media," *European Journal of Communication* 27, no.1 (2012): 3-6; Stephen Coleman, "Believing the news: from sinking trust to atrophied efficacy," *European Journal of Communication* 27, no.1 (2012): 35-45; Van Zoonen, *I-Pistemology*, 57-60; Kees Brants, "Trust, cynicism, and responsiveness: the uneasy situation of journalism in democracy," in *Rethinking Journalism. Trust and participation in a transformed news landscape*, ed. Chris Peters and Marcel Broersma (New York: Routledge, 2013), 16-20; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 233-234; Albert, *Presse française*, 118-119.

57 Williams, *Read All About It!*, 215-217; Nick Davies, "Er dreigt een tijdperk van informatiechaos. Waarom journalisten niet meer kunnen doen wat ze behoren te doen," in *Journalistiek in diskrediet*, ed. Bert Ummelen (Diemen: AMB, 2009), 5-7; Kees Buijs, "Hoe het vraagteken achter diskrediet verdween. Terugblik en vooruitblik," in *Journalistiek in diskrediet*, ed. Bert Ummelen (Diemen: AMB, 2009), 117.

58 Cf. Rodney Benson and Daniel Hallin, "How States, Markets and Globalization Shape the News: The French and the National Press, 1965-97," *European Journal of Communication* 22, no.1 (2007), 3-4.

central debate has been centered the question whether the press actually is a watchdog or that it is not independent enough to adopt a critical stance vis-à-vis the political domain.<sup>59</sup>

The picture of the financial position of the quality dailies I have just painted, suggests that the influence of the commercial pressures in this period seems to be somewhat overestimated. The British and Dutch quality dailies in the sample were still quite profitable and could compensate commercial adversity by cost reductions, reorganizing the management or company structure and creating more space for advertisers that still saw the newspaper as an important way of attracting customers.<sup>60</sup> The French quality dailies were more fragile from the mid-1990s onwards and were struggling to maintain profitable.<sup>61</sup> Yet, the fact that *Le Figaro* shows few signs of a growing focus on featurized journalism reinforces the idea the discursive changes cannot be solely attributed to a commercial logic.

The above offers further support for my claim that the cultural influences within the recent development have been neglected too much. Rather than solely looking at commercialization and competition, it is important to also look at the evolving ideas about what constitutes newsworthy information and what the proper professional standards should be within journalism. Several scholars have pointed to the alienation between particularly the quality dailies and their readership with regard to what topics should be covered, how they should be approached, and which people should be given a voice within this coverage. In line with the ideas about the way journalism is developing within an increasingly postmodern society, they argue that the privileged boundaries between 'serious' journalism, meaning democratically rewarding coverage, versus popular journalism, referring to entertaining forms of 'light reading', are eroding.<sup>62</sup> As the ideas of the readership about such issues - especially within the younger generation - were changing, the quality dailies lost touch with their audience and especially with the eye on the future would not be able to sustain themselves.<sup>63</sup> According to Conboy maintaining the connection with the public is crucial for any type of journalism:

[A]ll forms of contemporary journalism need to be able to develop strategies of popularization which allow them to maintain some form of authentic claim to represent the opinions and lifestyles of a broad section of the people, aimed as they are at generalist markets and all in need of a certain amount of commercial success to be able to continue.<sup>64</sup>

Quality dailies could thus hardly avoid attuning their content more to their changing public - although my results suggest clear divergences between the different quality dailies.

Everybody thus agrees that the changed circumstances with regard to the institutional organization of the media landscape and the evolving characteristics of the readership have raised new challenges for quality journalism. Yet, whether this means that the traditional standards need to be enforced better or that certain standards need to be reconceptualized is still open for debate. The results of my content analysis shed light on the different ways in which dailies have approached

<sup>59</sup> Kuhn, *Media in Contemporary France*, 101-113.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 225-230; Ramaer, *De geldpers*, 8, 18-19, 99-103, 131-136.

<sup>61</sup> Eveno, *L'argent de la presse*, 177-181; Blandin, *Le Figaro*, 273-289.

<sup>62</sup> Brian McNair, "Trust, truth and objectivity. Sustaining quality journalism in the era of the content-generating user," in *Rethinking Journalism. Trust and participation in a transformed news landscape*, ed. Chris Peters & Marcel Broersma (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 78-80.

<sup>63</sup> Stewart, *History of the Times*, 616-620; Ramaer, *De geldpers*, 113-115; Annet Mooij, *Dag in dag uit. Een journalistieke geschiedenis van de Volkskrant vanaf 1980* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2011), 216-234.

<sup>64</sup> Martin Conboy, "Permeation and profusion," in *Journalism Studies* 8, no.1 (2007): 3-4; cf. Costera Meijer, "The paradox of popularity," 96-116.

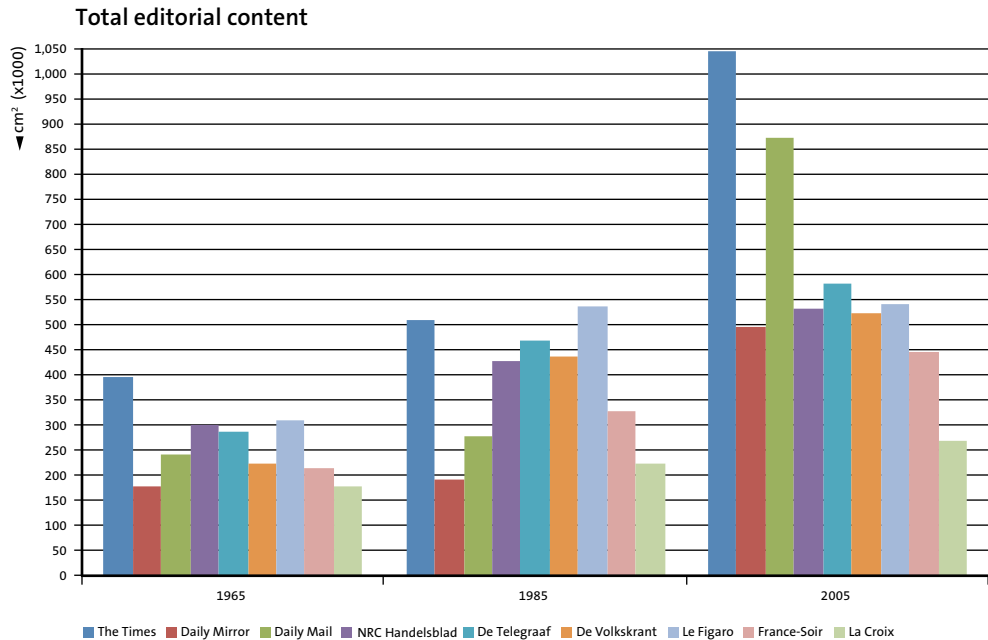


this issue, showing the divergent choices papers have made with regard to the question how they can best deal with these new circumstances. Two main strategies can be discerned in the way quality dailies deal with the challenges. They either maintain or even strengthen the high modern quality profile or they redefine the professional conception of journalism, rejecting the strict boundaries between quality and popular journalism, commonly regarded as ‘going down-market’. Although the latter phrase embodies an arguable implicit denouncement of the development in terms of quality, it does point to the fact that certain dailies have tried to attract a new audience by tapping into the reader’s changed views on journalism and what dailies should have to offer.

### Catching the eyes of the readership

As mentioned earlier, the dailies’ experiments in the decades after the war with additional section really took off in the period at hand.<sup>65</sup> Particularly in the Netherlands and Great Britain, the 1980s really ushered in the era of the supplement, such as literary and cultural, scientific supplements, general background sections, but also special quires devoted to sports, lifestyle and human interest gained prominence in the dailies. Subsequently, the dailies in the Netherlands grew considerably in size in this period (Graph 10.3). Moreover, in Britain it seems better to talk about an explosion of newspaper content; in 2005 the Saturday editions of *The Times* or the *Daily Mail* had for instance more than 200 pages. In spite of the beneficial additional advertisement revenues these supplements raised, filling the ranks of such bulky papers obviously cost money and not every supplement was a given commercial success.<sup>66</sup>

Graph 10.3



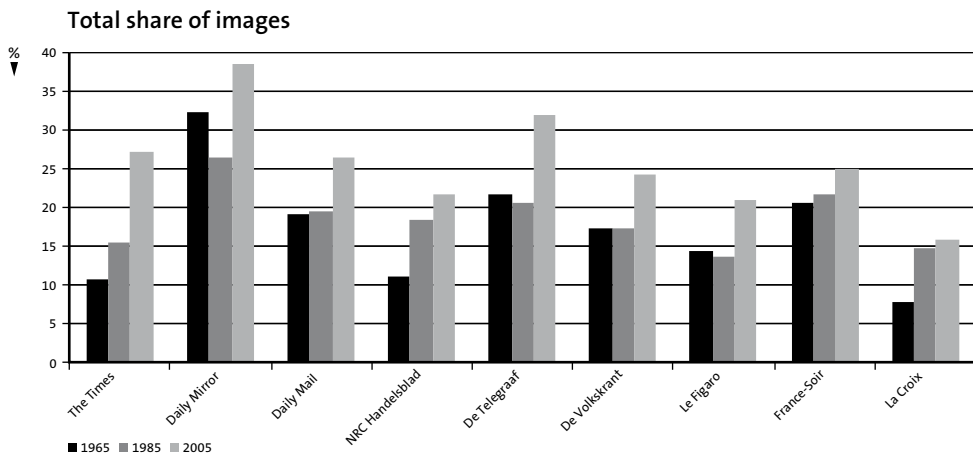
<sup>65</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 423; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 231.

<sup>66</sup> Mooij, *Dag in dag uit*, 215; Ramaer, *De geldpers*, 101-103.

The weekly magazines that many papers added to the Saturday edition were printed in full-color and signal the increasing dominance of the visual in this period. Around the 1980s and 1990s almost every daily received a thorough visual restyling. As press historians have pointed out, the visual strategy of a daily became an even more conscious element in expressing the profile of the papers. Their visual appearance generally became more conspicuous, which enabled dailies to keep pace - at least to some extent - with the visual appeal of the increasingly dominant television and the emergence of 'glossy' magazines (see front pages on pages 208-224).

After this restyling the pages of the dailies were filled with less text, because of bigger and bolder headlines, clearer subheadings, and more pages white.<sup>67</sup> Not surprising, pictures played a very important part in this restyling. Especially between 1985 and 2005 most dailies displayed a considerable growth in the amount of space they devoted to pictures (Graph 10.4).

Graph 10.4



Black-and-white pictures could not satisfy the public anymore and from the end of the 1980s on onwards more and more photos were published in full-color. In spite of a growing acceptance, pictures, especially in color, are still associated with sensationalism and an overemphasis on emotions. This extends to the overall visual appearance, and exuberance in this respect thus remains to be considered as a sign of deteriorating journalistic standards.<sup>68</sup> It is therefore likely that the growing emphasis on lay-out and pictures has contributed to the perception of an increasing tabloidization.

Another visual development that has contributed to this claim is the shift from broadsheet to a more compact format by many quality dailies. The commercial decline of the newspaper business has forced most British, Dutch and French quality dailies, among which *The Times* (2003), *de Volkskrant* (2010), *NRC Handelsblad* (2011), and *Le Figaro* (2009), to switch to the cheaper Berliner or tabloid format. Somewhat ironically *De Telegraaf* is the only daily that is still published on broadsheet, whereas the quality dailies are all compacts now.<sup>69</sup> The fact that these quality dailies stressed that

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Visual Strategies," 190-194.

<sup>68</sup> Becker, "Photojournalism," 130-153; Broersma, *Visual Strategies*, 194-195.

<sup>69</sup> Recently, the paper determined to switch to a compact size in the fall of 2014, cf. "Telegraaf over op tabloid-formaat," *nos.nl*, January 21, 2014 [Consultable at: <http://nos.nl/artikel/600481-telegraaf-over-op-tabloidformaat.html>, last consulted at April 3, 2014].

such a switch was not accompanied by the adoption of a popular conception of journalism and that some dailies tried to avoid the negatively connoted term 'tabloid' by using the term 'compact', supports the idea that the tabloid size was directly associated a market-oriented conception of journalism, which was considered of lower quality.<sup>70</sup>

The way these clear visual changes have been assessed show a certain prejudice about the use of these visual strategies that is similar to the crude tabloidization perspective. Rather than a nuanced empirical analysis of the way the visual characteristics have changed and what journalistic developments they convey, visual exuberance is often conflated with superficiality. The fact that, for instance, more space is consumed by larger headlines, more page white, and full-color pictures not necessarily reveals anything about the quality of the accompanying text and that the space these visual elements take up is easily compensated by the increase in editorial space of the dailies is disregarded in too many cases. More fundamentally, because journalistic standards are dynamic, it is impossible to determine objectively what makes the appearance of a daily sensational in the sense that it distorts reality by overemphasizing or misrepresenting certain characteristics of the news.<sup>71</sup> Similar to the critique on the concept of tabloidization, some caution and nuance is thus needed in the way the developments of the visual appearance of newspapers is assessed, instead of conflating all these changing characteristics and regarding them as inherent manifestations of the dumbing down of journalism.

## More entertaining news?

The increasing visual exuberance of dailies is often associated with the adoption of a popular news agenda. The interplay between the proliferation of media outlets, the fragmentation of the audience, and the decline in newspaper readership meant a challenge for dailies in maintaining their appeal to both current and prospective readers. Scholars have pointed especially to the pressure it put on the quality dailies and the way they were balancing their attention between different topics. Yet, again the emphasis on the commercial and institutional developments is too strong and drowns out the cultural factors that play a role within this context. Since roughly the 1990s the self-evidence of the hierarchical opposition between typical serious news topics that were considered to foster a healthy democracy, such as politics and economics, and more entertaining topics, like human interests and sports, has been gradually dissolving.

Under influence of the rise of postmodern society and culture, this opposition that is rooted in the framework of journalistic high modernism started to erode. The ideas about what constituted good citizenship within a democracy were revisited and reconceptualized, acknowledging the democratic role information focused on human interest, lifestyle or sports can play within society.<sup>72</sup> Living up to the democratic responsibility every citizen was no longer solely regarded as keeping track of the (foreign) political and economic news and reading the rational analyses of these topics. It was considered to also encompass a broader process of cultural exchange, in which people share their more individual experiences and emotions in order to safeguard the cohesion within society.<sup>73</sup> Some dailies therefore granted human interest, lifestyle and sports a more equal position within

<sup>70</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 228.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Gabi Schaap & Alexander Pleijter, "Het sensatiegehalte van voorpaginafoto's: een inhoudsanalyse van populaire en kwaliteitskranten in Nederland," *Tijdschrift voor communicatiewetenschap* 40, no.1 (2012): 71-73.

<sup>72</sup> Jon Simons, "Popular Culture and Mediated Politics: Intellectuals, Elites and Democracy," in *Media and the Restyling of Politics*, ed. John Corner & Dick Pels (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2003), 174.

<sup>73</sup> Bardoel, "Het einde van de journalistiek," 366-367; Peter Dahlgren, "Reconfiguring Civi Culture in the New Media Milieu," in *Media and the Restyling of Politics*, ed. John Corner & Dick Pels (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2003), 153-160.

the newspaper, which subsequently also resulted in fuzzier boundaries between them. Such a new topical orientation links up to the changed perspective on journalism's role within society and relate to the notion of 'life politics' in which democratic engagement is no longer defined as participating in a rational debate concerning institutional politics. It also encompasses the informal exchange of experiences and emotions of ordinary people with regard to what traditionally are regarded as non-political issues.<sup>74</sup>

In some cases such quality dailies started to mix in popular elements in their coverage of serious topics, which is closely related to the developments on the level of the genre that I will discuss further on in this chapter and in more detail in the next. However, there were also important differences in way the dailies in the different countries have been dealing with these developments. Such changes thus certainly do not have as straightforward or uniform outcome as is sometimes suggested in the heated debate on journalism in the recent years.<sup>75</sup>

Before moving to the quality dailies, it is elucidating to see how the popular dailies developed in this period. Apart from *France-Soir*, the popular dailies display a more or less steady pattern, which can be explained by the fact that the popular press was in a sense already better attuned to the changing ideas about journalism.<sup>76</sup> They maintained and in some cases strengthened their popular profile. The results show that these dailies clearly devoted less and less attention to politics as well as economic issues - or like *France-Soir* never spent much attention to the latter topic in the first place - after 1965. Only for *De Telegraaf*, honoring its financial roots, economy has remained one of the unique selling points, resulting in 1975 in a large daily supplement on finance called *De Financiële Telegraaf* as Wolf has demonstrated.<sup>77</sup> The emphasis on human interest and lifestyle generally remained much stronger in the popular press. Between 1985 and 2005 the share of human interest even increased in the British popular dailies.

The discursive development of *France-Soir* is a story in itself. Its haphazard changes in topical focus are striking and can be explained by the several anxious attempts of the paper to revive itself by making drastic changes in the editorial focus. In spite of their 'trial and error' fashion of looking for a solution, the daily was not able to turn the financial tide as the daily finally had to shut down in 2012.<sup>78</sup>

Apart from the flailing *France-Soir*, the popular press did not seem to have felt the need to change its editorial focus. The quality dailies show a different picture. The results indicate that the attention for politics has diminished considerably between 1985 and 2005 in some of these dailies, but certainly not in all of them and not to the same degree either (Graph 10.5). Most conspicuous is the decrease of politics within *The Times*. Between 1985 and 2005 politics has more than halved, drawing closer to the journalistic profile of the Mail. This development of *The Times* should be seen in the light of the takeover by media tycoon Rupert Murdoch. As Stewart argues in a nuanced analysis, Murdoch changed the editorial profile in order to connect better to a large part of the readership that had different take on what a quality daily should offer, while simultaneously attempting to make the daily profitable again.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right. The Future of Radical Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 14-15; W. Lance Bennett, "Lifestyle Politics and Citizen-Consumers: Identity, Communication and Political Action in Late Modern Society," in *Media and the Restyling of Politics*, ed. John Corner & Dick Pels (London: Sage Publications, 2003), 139-146.

<sup>75</sup> Franklin, "Newszak," 13-18; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 231-232; Sparks, "Introduction," 5-9.

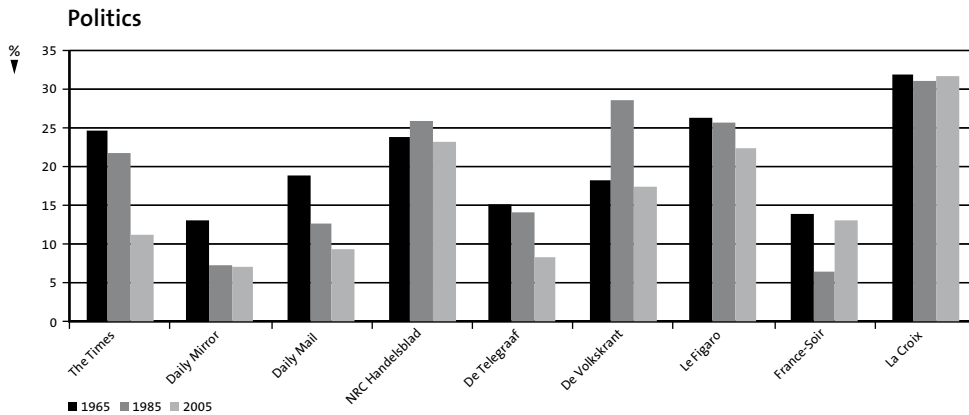
<sup>76</sup> This is not to say that they performed their democratic role better than the quality dailies, but it was more in touch with the wishes of their audience.

<sup>77</sup> Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf*, 438-439.

<sup>78</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 242; Obbema, "Frankrijk zonder France Soir, het is triest."

<sup>79</sup> Stewart, *History of The Times*, 616-657.

Graph 10.5



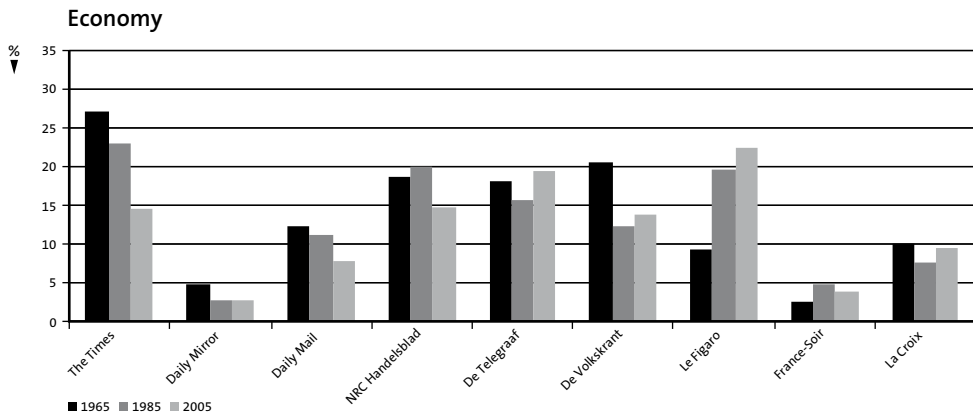
The development of politics within Dutch and French quality dailies shows a different, more diverse image. *NRC Handelsblad* and *Le Figaro* only display a minor decrease in the attention devoted to politics in the period at hand. Conversely, after having developed a stronger quality profile between 1965 and 1985, *de Volkskrant* does show a decline in the share of political content in the daily. As Mooij and Ramaer have argued, this was the result of the changing editorial focus due to the growing feeling with parts of the editorial staff that they were losing touch with large parts of their rather diverse readership, in which on the background commercial considerations also played a part. These reporters believed that the coverage of the paper they worked for ignored an emerging discontent about the way institutional politics operated and politicians and officials tried to organize society. In their eyes too many journalists were too enveloped in the political domain and had almost become part of the political elite. Subsequently newspapers had alienated an important part of their audience as their reporters could not relate to their perspective on politics and society anymore. According to Mooij and Ramaer, the new editorial board that took office in the mid-nineties therefore wanted to expand the news agenda and adopt different approaches to the issues the paper reported on. In the eyes of the new editor-in-chief, Pieter Broertjes, the coverage in the paper followed the institutional political agenda too strictly. Under his guidance the daily has opened up its ranks to a diversity of perspectives and opinions, more coverage of popular culture and to reporting that adopted a stronger human interest angle.<sup>80</sup>

The general image of the different responses of these dailies is more or less reinforced by the role economic news has played in the paper (Graph 10.6). In Great Britain the share of economic and financial coverage in *The Times* mirrors the developments of political content and declined considerably. Again, this does not apply to the quality dailies in the other countries. After an already strong increase of attention to economic news in *Le Figaro* between 1965 and 1985, this topic has become even more prominent in the following decades. In the Netherlands *NRC* shows a clear and considerable decline, whereas *de Volkskrant* slightly bounced back in this respect after a serious decline between 1965 and 1985, bringing the two dailies closer to each other in this respect. The change of the latter can be explained by the growing wish of certain journalists at *de Volkskrant* to have an economy supplement, which also allowed for more specific advertisement on mortgages, investments, and pension plans. This led to the introduction of a daily economy supplement in 2001.

<sup>80</sup> Mooij, *Dag in dag uit*, 166-172, 213-229; Ramaer, *De geldpers*, 111-115.

Although it was cut again within three years, it does signal a renewed importance of this topic within the daily.<sup>81</sup>

Graph 10.6



An inversion of this pattern can also be discerned with regard to topics associated with entertainment, such as sports coverage and human interest and lifestyle news (Graph 10.7 & 10.8). In *The Times* and *de Volkskrant* the attention for human interest has grown considerably between 1985 and 2005.<sup>82</sup> Conversely, the attention for human interest in *NRC Handelsblad* declined somewhat and in *Le Figaro* it only increased slightly. Sports news is a different story. Only *The Times* displays an increase, whereas the topic has actually declined in its popular counterparts. The topic also lost ground in the Dutch and French quality dailies in this period. In spite the strong tradition of sports journalism in Great Britain it seems that apart from *The Times* the proliferation of media sports journalism has moved more and more to other media outlets. As scholars have suggested, the introduction of commercial sports channels and the increase of sports news that is distributed via websites, social media and by the sports teams and organizations themselves have made sports coverage very fast and highly competitive, which made it hard for papers to keep up. This could explain why particularly quality dailies in countries with a less strong tradition of sports journalism have been less inclined to increase their focus on this topic.<sup>83</sup> That *The Times* shows such a divergent development can, according to Stewart, be partially attributed to its stronger popular orientation, but should also be related to the fact that Murdoch's media conglomerate owned the broadcasting rights of the Premier League for instance. Subsequently, Murdoch reserved funds for an expansion of the sports section in this period as well.<sup>84</sup>

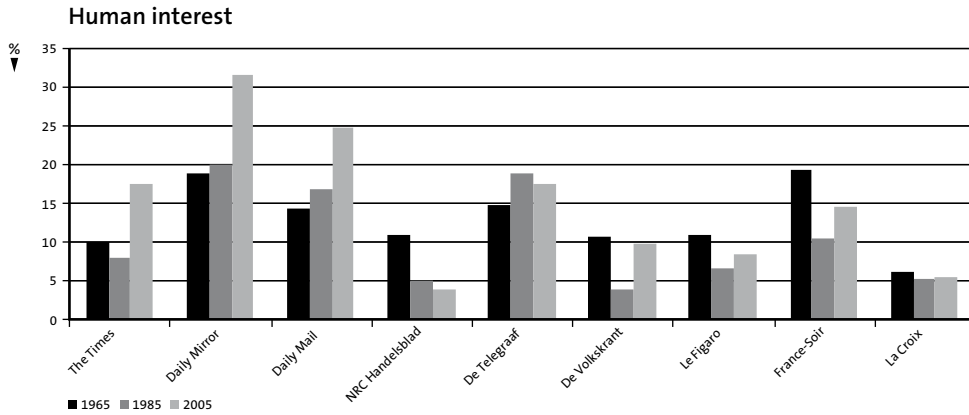
<sup>81</sup> Mooij, *Dag in dag uit*, 227-229.

<sup>82</sup> The large share of human interest in the Netherlands in 1965 can be attributed to the Royal marriage of Princes Beatrix and Prince Claus, which raised a great deal of attention in the dailies.

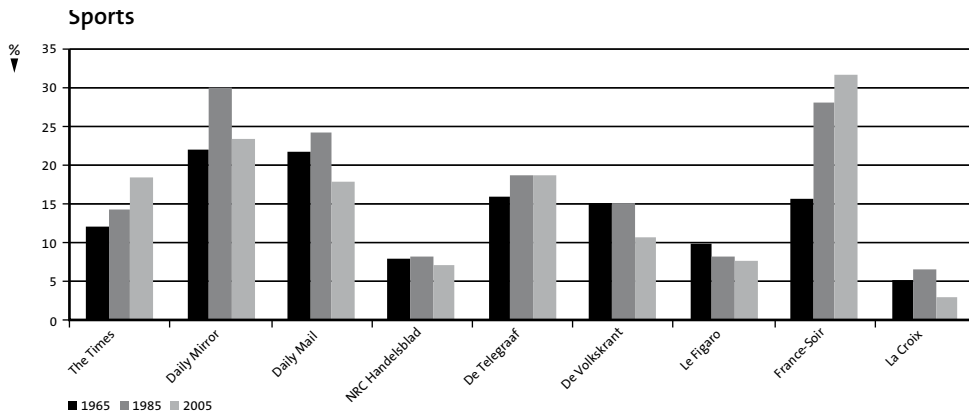
<sup>83</sup> Cf. Raymond Boyle, *Sports Journalism. Context and Issues* (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 30-52; J. Rice, "Sports leagues as media moguls: what happens when the people we cover start to control the news?," *Nieman Journalism Lab*, June 29, 2009: [www.niemanlab.org/2009/06/sports-leagues-as-media-moguls-what-happens-when-the-people-we-cover-start-to-control-the-news/](http://www.niemanlab.org/2009/06/sports-leagues-as-media-moguls-what-happens-when-the-people-we-cover-start-to-control-the-news/) (accessed August 2, 2013).

<sup>84</sup> Stewart, *The History of The Times*, 451-455.

Graph 10.7



Graph 10.8



These results thus signal the complexity of the development of the dailies and show the two divergent strategies quality dailies adopt. Their particular discursive development depends on their profile, their position within the media landscape, and their target audience in relation to the particular interaction between commercial and cultural context. Although the results show that the profile of some of the quality dailies moved closer towards their popular counterparts, these newspapers have always categorically rejected any type of branding that suggested they were ‘going down-market’. Based on my analysis, I argue that their rejection of such a mono-causal assessment has merit. Too often the cultural dynamics are not taken into account and too often critics cannot get passed binary opposition that obscure a nuanced examination of the developments, which is illustrated by the poor attempt to capture the developments within the press with the term ‘qualoid’ that Williams has pointed to.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, not all quality dailies have developed in this manner. The difference between *NRC Handelsblad* and *de Volkskrant* indicates that quality dailies can differ in the way they deal with the same encompassing economic pressures and changing cultural context. In Britain, the particular

<sup>85</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 223-232; for an example of a press history that adopts a more nuanced perspective on the recent developments, cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 454-457, 511-512.

development of *The Times* is therefore unlikely to be the only path. The manager of the *Telegraph* for instance has vowed “to stay quality and milk everything we can out of being the last broadsheet in the market.”<sup>86</sup> Although further research is needed to see how papers like *The Guardian* and the *Telegraph* developed discursively, this quote shows that some dailies might try to maintain the high modern conception of journalism.

Thus, Esser's critique on the supposed widespread and uniform development of the quality press is an oversimplification of the complex development of the different dailies in the three countries finds strong support in my data. Equating any deviation from the journalistic standards of high modernism with dumbing down raises further problems, for several scholars have argued that quality is a dynamic notion that is even with consensus about the criteria is difficult to determine objectively.<sup>87</sup> The latter can be illustrated by a comparison of the way the development of *The Times* and *de Volkskrant* has been perceived and how this relates to my empirical data. My analysis suggests that both papers experienced a similar development between 1985 and 2005, but as press histories convey the latter was only mildly criticized for adopting certain popular elements, whereas *The Times* was strongly accused of abandoning quality standards for superficial journalism focused on making profit.<sup>88</sup> Apart from the differences in newspaper content that are effaced by the inherently reductive categories used in the content analysis, it seems that other factors like the way the paper has positioned itself in the debate and has explained the editorial changes have also played an important role in the consideration. For instance, in this particular case the reputation of Murdoch as a ruthless media tycoon, who only focuses on profit, has certainly reinforced the belief that *The Times* has been dumbing down.<sup>89</sup>

Beside the fact that any assessment of the quality of these dailies is determined by the conception of journalism someone subscribes to, this consideration is further complicated by questions about the right empirical measure to base the assessment on. Should it be based on number of articles, size or relative share within the daily? For instance, by comparing the relative share with the absolute number pertaining to the different topics in the respective dailies the complexity of the analysis becomes apparent (Table 10c). It shows for instance that although relatively speaking politics has lost prominence in the British dailies, in absolute numbers the amount of coverage increased somewhat. Comparing *The Times* with *NRC Handelsblad* for instance reveals that both papers devote a similar amount of attention to politics. Furthermore, the absolute difference between *The Times* on the one hand and the *Mail* and *Mirror* on the other make clear that there is still a considerable gap between these papers with regard to the amount attention they devote to ‘serious’ topics. Yet, such numbers do not discount for the general increase in size and content of the dailies.

My analysis thus suggests that with regard to the topical dimension the growing emphasis on featurized journalism only applies to several of the quality dailies. Furthermore, the automatic connection between such a development and dumbing down is problematic and should also take into account other discursive aspects of featurized journalism, such as source consultation and the choice of genre, which relate respectively to the focus and style dimension.

<sup>86</sup> Martin Newland cited in: Williams, *Read All About It!*, 228.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Henrik Örnebring & Anna Maria Jönsson, “Tabloid Journalism and the Public Sphere,” in *The Tabloid Culture Reader*, ed. Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn (Berkshire/New York: Open University Press, 2008), 23-24; Costera Meijer, “Naar een goed journal,” 396-399; Schaap & Pleijter, “Sensatiegehalte van nieuwsfoto's,” 71-73.

<sup>88</sup> Stewart, *The History of The Times*, 558-563; Mooij, *Dag in dag uit*, 166-174.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Stewart, *The History of The Times*, 42-46.



Table 10c

Newspaper	Year	Politics			Economy			Human interest & Lifestyle			Sports		
		Space in cm <sup>2</sup>	Number of articles	Space in cm <sup>2</sup>	Number of articles	Space in cm <sup>2</sup>	Number of articles	Space in cm <sup>2</sup>	Number of articles	Space in cm <sup>2</sup>	Number of articles	Space in cm <sup>2</sup>	Number of articles
<i>The Times</i>	1965	96985.27	821	107033.90	1035	39213.67	244	46911.28	385				
	1985	109677.05	711	116878.48	587	40332.72	180	72508.57	518				
	2005	117323.41	573	151538.66	715	181004.92	616	191091.43	781				
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	1965	23082.11	263	8505.53	131	33019.24	250	38694.10	382				
	1985	13981.34	155	5291.82	102	38279.56	261	57405.46	480				
	2005	34571.29	211	13867.76	103	155722.99	639	115303.22	533				
<i>Daily Mail</i>	1965	45862.07	348	29981.13	301	34853.95	271	52525.68	413				
	1985	35005.45	236	30628.06	284	46366.23	265	66303.10	469				
	2005	80393.90	278	66977.96	355	215539.94	554	154951.53	590				
<i>Algemeen/ NRC Handelsblad</i>	1965	71694.06	441	56272.50	357	32930.50	177	23322.30	166				
	1985	109681.70	492	84458.30	391	20939.60	54	34554.70	168				
	2005	123328.30	475	77981.80	324	20605.00	77	38170.80	199				
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	1965	43611.31	278	52233.23	309	42271.84	173	45924.64	353				
	1985	66419.88	268	73576.80	280	88702.48	210	87958.72	387				
	2005	48451.53	233	112647.11	532	101215.22	272	108344.54	433				
<i>de Volkskrant</i>	1965	40731.73	234	46007.21	317	23973.60	128	33940.10	211				
	1985	123912.12	502	53308.55	246	16433.63	69	65286.12	313				
	2005	91071.00	363	72507.10	282	51121.40	157	56154.20	224				
<i>Le Figaro</i>	1965	81321.99	692	28959.20	241	33983.30	217	30128.90	282				
	1985	138195.60	612	105022.91	541	35296.52	179	44480.57	254				
	2005	121120.72	561	121224.56	726	45091.59	164	40586.06	237				
<i>France-Soir</i>	1965	29515.44	231	5537.80	58	41065.63	184	33251.50	240				
	1985	21008.30	104	15722.63	61	33880.85	133	90783.23	301				
	2005	58321.08	212	17094.57	112	64734.63	244	141840.45	443				
<i>La Croix</i>	1965	57373.78	402	18112.07	161	10846.18	105	9444.24	118				
	1985	69559.66	342	17101.09	133	11862.11	54	14672.91	109				
	2005	84630.46	392	25503.91	154	14371.21	69	8022.48	44				

## Consulting different sources

Before going into the type of sources the dailies consult, relating to the focus of an account, it is necessary to also look at the source consultation and attribution in general. The general use of sources links up to the critique on the growing superficiality of quality journalism or what esteemed British journalist Nick Davies calls 'churnalism' in his much praised book *Flat Earth News*. Based on research into the journalistic content of the British quality dailies - which according to Davies also applies to journalism in other countries - he argues that journalists nowadays too often uncritically patch through content produced by news agencies and press releases by public relations departments. Like others before him, Davies lays the blame with the commercial pressures on the newspaper business, because of which the dailies can no longer afford to allocate enough time to journalists for original newsgathering and reporting. He argues that this results in journalists too often regurgitating the information offered by others instead of actually verifying and contextualizing such information.<sup>90</sup> Next to Davies' critique of such superficial 'he said she said' journalism, other critics and scholars have also pointed to the collapsing boundaries between detached facts and subjective experience and opinion. This development is also regarded as undermining journalism's function as watchdog of democracy and guardian of the public interest.<sup>91</sup>

In a response to Davies' claims, Broersma has pointed out that the conclusions Davies draws lack the necessary nuance as he neglects the changing cultural circumstances. According to him, Davies' interpretation of the data can be challenged on several fronts. The main point Broersma makes is that the research does not elucidate the nature and function of the articles that are derived from news agencies and press releases and makes no distinction between the two. Firstly, he argues that the research does not make clear whether journalists have enriched the information they received, which makes it hard to draw the conclusion that they are just regurgitating information. Moreover, Broersma contends that it is not necessarily a bad thing if the quick facts or 'fast news' is outsourced to large news agencies, but fits in with the broader development towards more background stories. The editorial staff of a paper can devote most of their attention to provide 'slow news', giving a more in-depth analytic or contextualized look at the news. The same goes for the use of press releases, although the danger of bias and distortion of reality is stronger in such cases.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, on many occasions press releases briefly summarize numbers, provide fact lists or encompass concise reports. Thus, the use of news agencies and press releases is not automatically a negative thing. Davies' pessimistic conclusions thus need to be substantiated better with a much more nuanced analysis of the content than the current research he draws on.<sup>93</sup>

This line of reasoning links up with the ideas behind the notion of featurized journalism, which also acknowledges the positive sides of the recent developments. My research offers some tentative support for this critique of Davies' somewhat hasty conclusions. The results show that across the board the dailies have consulted the same amount or even more sources both in absolute and rela-

<sup>90</sup> Davies, *Flat Earth News*. 69-78; Davies, "Informatiechaos," 5-21; cf. Lewis, Justin et.al., *The Quality and Independence of British Journalism. Tracking the Changes over 20 Years. Project Report*. Cardiff: Mediawise, 2008: [www.mediawise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Quality-Independence-of-British-Journalism.pdf](http://www.mediawise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Quality-Independence-of-British-Journalism.pdf) (accessed August 14, 2013).; Ellen Hijmans, Kees Buijs & Pytrik Schafraad, "Nieuwsbronnen en de kwaliteit van de journalistiek. Een verkennende analyse van binnenlandse nieuwsonderwerpen in vier Nederlandse dagbladen," *Journalistiek in diskrediet*, ed. Bert Ummelen (Diemen: AMB, 2009), 41-66; cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 237-239.

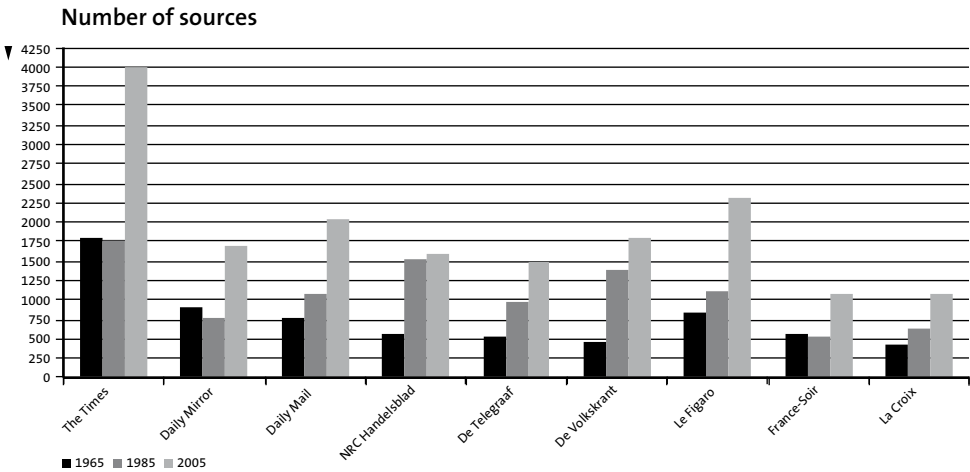
<sup>91</sup> Cf. Gripsrud, "Tabloidization, Popular Journalism and Democracy," 40-44; Mark Deuze, "Popular Journalism and professional ideology: tabloid reporters and editors speak out," in *The Tabloid Culture Reader*, ed. Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn (New York: Open University Press, 2008), 229-233.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Mirjam Prenger and Frank van Vree, *Schuivende grenzen. De vrijheid van de journalist in een veranderend medialandschap* ([n.p.]: NVJ, 2004), 34-38.

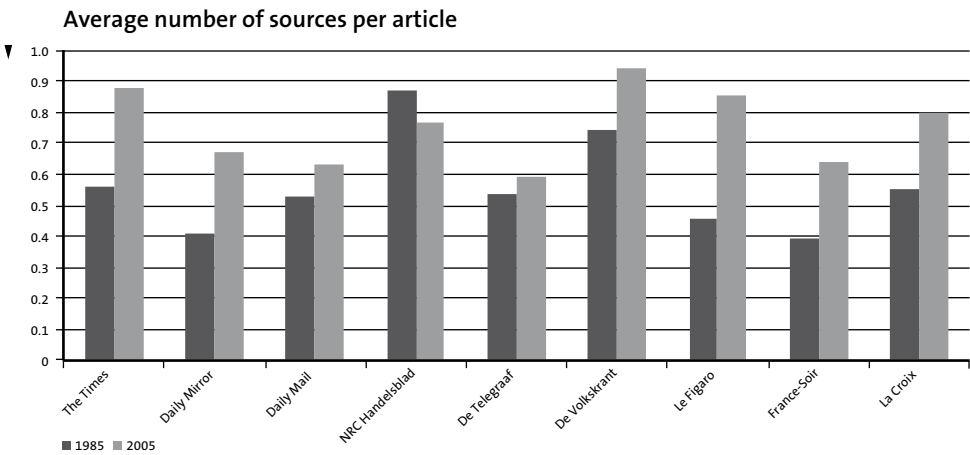
<sup>93</sup> Marcel Broersma, "De waarheid in tijden van crisis. Kwaliteitsjournalistiek in een veranderend medialandschap," in *Journalistiek in diskrediet*, ed. Bert Ummelen (Diemen: AMB, 2009), 23-32.

tive numbers (Graphs 10.9 & 10.10). Only *NRC Handelsblad* shows a modest decline between 1985 and 2005, but is still clearly one of the dailies that on average consults the most sources per article in this period.

Graph 10.9

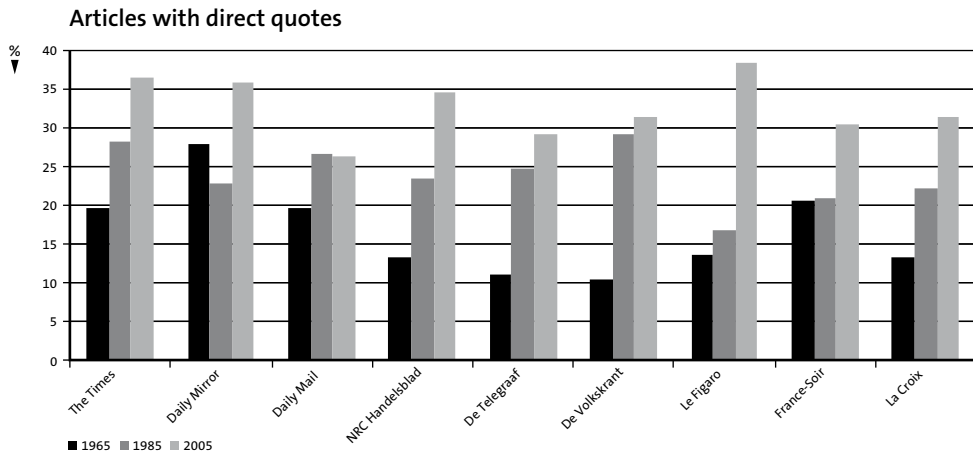


Graph 10.10



These results indicate that interviewing as a routine is still at the center of everyday journalism practice, and it offers some support for the claim that original reporting is not in decline or that reporting is not being replaced with opinion articles. This is reinforced by the still growing percentage of articles in which direct quotes play a part (Graph 10.11).

Graph 10.11



Obviously, these results do not tell whether journalists consult sources in a balanced and impartial way. Nevertheless, the results do suggest that journalists still emphasize the factuality of their accounts, in the sense that information is based on or confirmed by source consultation.<sup>94</sup>

Bigger differences can be seen in the type of sources the different dailies consult in their coverage. In graph 10.12 it is clear that whereas politicians had a dominant role in particularly the quality dailies in 1985, they have lost some of their prominence as a source by 2005. At the same time the perspective of the 'vox pop', the ordinary people in the street, has gained importance in most dailies with the exception of the French, which maintained a stronger focus on and attachment to the societal elite.<sup>95</sup> Like the changing topical orientation, the differences in focus is also an integral aspect of 'life politics' and reinforce the idea that the societal role and professional standards are developing.<sup>96</sup> Not only politicians and authorities were deemed as important sources, but the citizens themselves also needed to have the opportunity to share their experiences and relate to each other. This change manifests itself the strongest in *The Times*, which draws very close to the popular dailies in this respect, with *de Volkskrant* following closely. *NRC Handelsblad* and *Le Figaro* display a more stable picture with regard to the sources they consult.

These general differences can in part be explained by the disparity in the share of political coverage in the dailies. It seems obvious that *The Times* for instance will consult fewer politicians when its political coverage in general has strongly declined between 1985 and 2005. Yet, the source consultation within just the political coverage suggests that this is not the only reason for this decline (Graph 10.13). Apart from *Le Figaro*, which does not show an unequivocal development in this respect, all the quality dailies have shifted some of their attention for the voice of the politicians to the voices of the 'ordinary citizens'.<sup>97</sup>

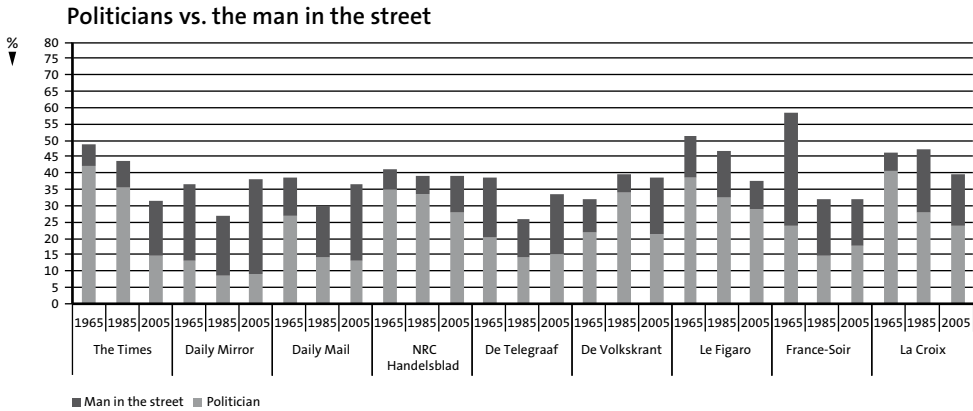
<sup>94</sup> Cf. Tuchman, *Making News*, 83-101.

<sup>95</sup> Thogmartin, *National Daily Press*, 307-308; Kuhn, *Media in Contemporary France*, 42-43, 105-113.

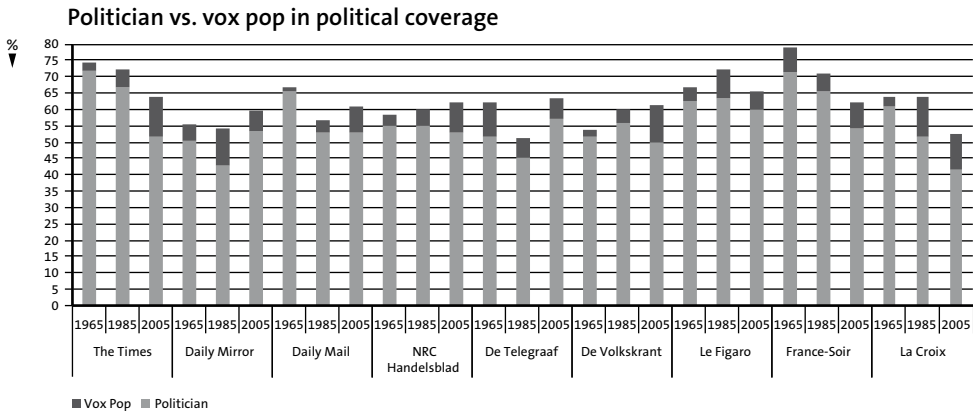
<sup>96</sup> Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right*, 14-15; Bennet, "Lifestyle Politics and Citizen-Consumers," 139-146.

<sup>97</sup> I have deliberately left the popular dailies out of the analysis as the amount of politics in these papers was decimated to an extent that small changes in the amount of sources had strong effects on the relative numbers of the results.

Graph 10.12



Graph 10.13



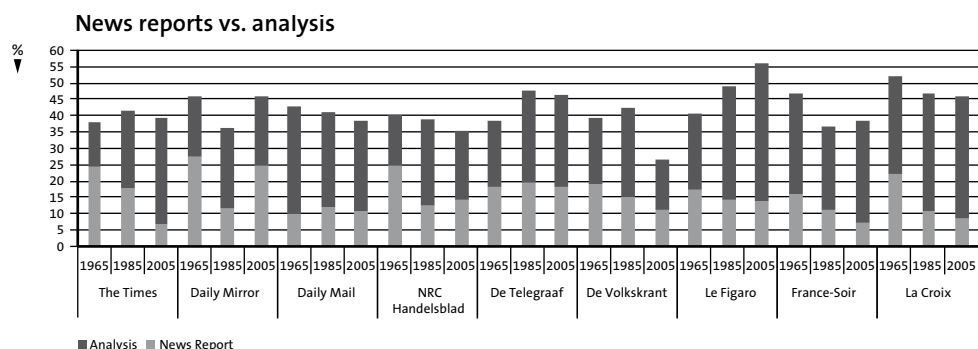
The results can therefore offer some support for the changing perspective on political coverage that manifests in this characteristic of featurized journalism, which links up to the changing ideas about the way newspapers could perform their democratic role within the broader framework of postmodern society and culture. As I discussed, its influence on journalism has manifested itself in a growing doubt about the self-evidence of the dichotomy between hard and soft news. Moreover, it has cast doubt on the methods and procedures traditional institutions, such as politics, science, and journalism, employed to arrive at their representation of reality. Subsequently, these institutional actors, like politicians, have been losing authority and their credibility as a source is questioned.<sup>98</sup> This development went hand in hand with a revaluation of the experiences and perspectives on the world of ordinary people. For that reason some dailies started to incorporate the voices of these ordinary citizens more often within the political coverage and within the paper in general.

<sup>98</sup> Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 512; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 233-237; cf. Golding, Sousa & Van Zoonen, "Trust and the Media," 3-6; Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 57-60.

## Providing context: analysis or experience?

Similar changes in the professional practice have manifested themselves in the choice of genre within the dailies as well. Examining the choice of genre can elucidate the focus and style dimension of featurized journalism by indicating to what extent the dailies focused on personal experience and storytelling. As my analysis in the previous chapters suggests, the quality dailies in the 1960s were reluctant to give up their role as the first providers of the latest news. Yet, by 1985 they also more or less accepted that they could not compete with the growing dominance of television (Graph 10.14). Apart from *De Telegraaf*, all dailies experienced a decline in the share of news reports. The general decline of the news report was accompanied by a growing focus on background stories.<sup>99</sup> In the quality dailies this genre focused mostly on analyses of political issues. Between the 30% and 40% of the genre focused on this topic, which reinforced the position of these dailies with regard to their role in democracy. The fact that the average length of the news reports in *De Telegraaf* doubled, can explain why there was no decrease in the share of the genre in the daily noticeable. Moreover, across the board the news report had developed itself from a concise and short article to a longer account. Rather than rendering only the main newsworthy elements, by 1985 news reports entailed a much more extensive way of covering an event, which was undercutting the boundaries between news and background.

Graph 10.14



In the period from roughly the end of the 1980s onwards, the focus on rational and detached analysis as the first and foremost genre to give background information was challenged. The influence of postmodern society on journalism led to a growing acceptance of the inherent entwining of factual reporting and commentary, of detached information and personal experience, of objective reality and inherently subjective stories. Within such a journalistic framework the experiences, emotions or beliefs of people with regard to a certain event started to be revalued. Scholars have connected this emerging conception of journalism to the growing acceptance of the intricately related use of storytelling techniques and its ways of personalizing accounts. Furthermore, they also connected it to the rise of forms of engaged reporting or 'journalism of attachment'.<sup>100</sup>

Williams and Wijfjes argue that these developments have manifested themselves in the growing

<sup>99</sup> Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 335; cf. Katherine Fink & Michael Schudson, "The Rise of Contextual Journalism, 1950s-2000s," *Journalism* 15, no.1 (2014): 3-20.

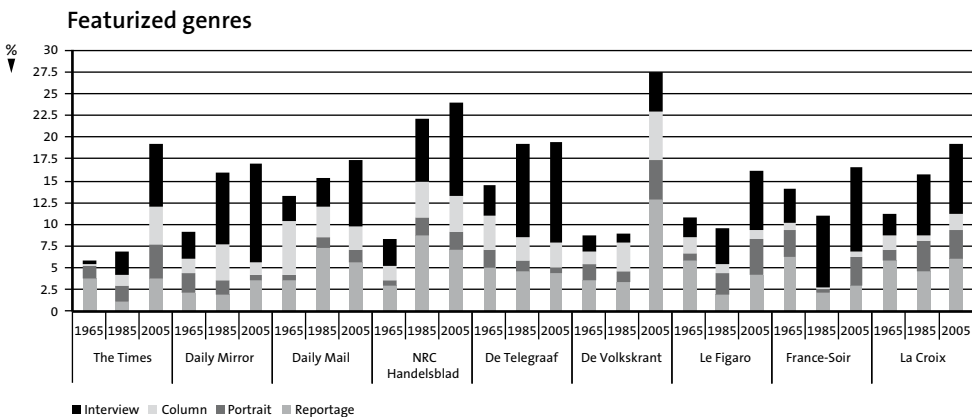
<sup>100</sup> Steensen, "Featurization," 49-52; Bird, "Tabloidization," 42-46; Wahl-Jorgenson, "Strategic Ritual of Emotionality," 130-133; Dahlgren, "The Troubling Evolution of Journalism," in *The Changing Faces of Journalism. Tabloidization, Technology and Truthiness*, ed. Barbie Zelizer (London/New York: Routledge, 2009), 153-156; Reinemann, "Hard and soft news," 221-239.

prominence of the personal column within the newspaper. Such accounts typically entail a highly subjective story in which information, personal experience and opinion often coincide. According to them, this genre really caught on in Britain and the Netherlands from the 1990s onwards, which finds support in the results of particularly *The Times* and *de Volkskrant*. They argue that newspapers hired esteemed journalists, publicists or otherwise famous people to attract readership by presenting their personal take on the world. The growing importance of this genre also infused critique, claiming that such opinion articles are “safe space fillers” signaling the decline of thorough and factual reporting in favor of a journalism of assertion.<sup>101</sup>

As I discussed earlier, the column is a genre that is in general distinguished from the other editorial content. It has a separate status and a columnist enjoys more discursive freedom than normal journalists. Thus, one could subsequently argue that rise of the column does not really undermine the affordances of the objectivity regime as it is considered to be separate from the reporting genres; an exception to the rule. Yet, according to Steensen the emergence of this competing perspective on journalism’s quality standards has also manifested itself in a growing prominence of mainstream reporting genres. According to him, genres like the reportage, the portrait or profile and the interview have become more prone to use storytelling techniques, resulting in personalization and engaged or even committed accounts. In his words, these genres “comprise a publicly recognized need to be entertained and connected with other people on a mainly emotional level by accounts of personal experiences that are related to contemporary events or perceived public interest.”<sup>102</sup>

Yet, my quantitative results only offer partial support for these claims and show that the quality dailies responded differently to the rapid and multifaceted changes within the press landscape and in society in general (Graph 10.15).<sup>103</sup> *The Times* and *de Volkskrant* show the strongest increase in the share of the typical genres of featurized journalism as their combined share have doubled between 1985 and 2005. Yet, in the former this increase was in addition to the growth of the share of background analysis, whereas in latter this genre declined in this period. In *Le Figaro* the increase has been much more modest, whereas in *NRC Handelsblad* growth is even marginal. Yet, in the latter these genres take up a rather high share of the content, which was already the case in 1985.

Graph 10.15



<sup>101</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, 228-231; Wijfjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 339.

<sup>102</sup> Steensen, “Featurization,” 51.

<sup>103</sup> The complexity of the data and the multifaceted nature of the developments make my analysis tentative, and demand more nuanced research in this respect.

This points to the tentative status that should be awarded to this analysis. Previous chapters in this thesis, together with prior research into this issue, have shown the ambivalent nature of these genres with regard to storytelling. They have the tendency to make use of storytelling techniques, like colorful writing, a first person perspective, conveying personal experiences and emotions, but they can also be shaped in a way that lives up to the textual conventions of the objectivity regime.<sup>104</sup> The fact that *The Times* and *de Volkskrant* focus increasingly on human interest and sports and less on politics or economics, whereas this is much less the case for *Le Figaro* and *NRC Handelsblad*, could be interpreted as a first indication that the genres within the former dailies might be more in line with the characteristics of featurized journalism than the latter. Still, such a conclusion needs more empirical substantiation, which my quantitative content analysis cannot provide.

The systematic nature of quantitative research with its inherently rigid categorization of the topics and genres makes it difficult to elucidate to what extent the textual characteristics of these newspaper accounts challenge the dichotomies between soft and hard news, or between an objective and more personal approach to an event. For that reason the next chapter offers a qualitative perspective on the textual characteristics of featurized journalism by exploring the storytelling techniques of the reportage within quality journalism. The analysis of the textual characteristics of reportages of prize-winning reporters in the three countries sheds light on their journalistic conception by looking to what extent they incorporate what have been considered as popular elements within the framework of the objectivity regime. These accounts elucidate the competition between the professional framework revolving around the objectivity norm and an alternative that is more in line with the affordances of postmodern society and culture. This competition is related to recent debates about the future of quality newspaper journalism.

## Conclusion

The period between 1975 and 2005 encompasses a period of high modernism in newspaper journalism in which the objectivity regime was considered self-evident, as well as the emergence of a framework challenging the assumptions underlying objective journalism. In the hey-day of the objectivity regime, the editorial staff of the newspapers was at its largest, the size of the editorial content of the dailies increased and specialized, and the professional process of journalism was at its peak. Furthermore, because of cost rationalization and high advertisement revenues most dailies were - to different degrees - still very profitable. Journalism from the mid-1990s onwards was dealing with growing commercial pressure, but apart from the French press most dailies were still profitable. Nevertheless, the discursive changes are generally ascribed to the growing impact of a commercial logic. Especially with regard to the quality dailies, this last period is often described by scholars as the era in which quality newspaper journalism can no longer maintain its professional standards and has become the victim of a market-driven process of tabloidization or 'dumbing down'.

In this chapter I have demonstrated that this concept of tabloidization can better be replaced with the less pejorative and more nuanced 'featurized journalism'. The notion is based on the idea that the recent journalistic developments are an intricate interaction between broader cultural developments related to the emergence of postmodern society and culture, in which the self-evidence of the high modern journalistic standards and the dichotomies that underlie the objectivity regime are questioned. As a less prescriptive concept, featurized journalism is better equipped to

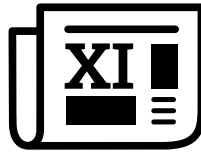
<sup>104</sup> Cf. Bas den Herder, "Personal questions, political answers," *Journalism Practice* 7, no.3 (2013): 6-13; Wahl Jorgenson, "Strategic ritual of emotionality," 138-139.



elucidate the complex developments within journalism on the level of the actual practice in relation the debate about the professional standards. It does not automatically equate any development away from the high modern ideals of journalism and subsequently from the objectivity regime with low quality standards. Furthermore, the concept distinguishes different forms of featurized journalism and acknowledges the possible pluriformity of the development pattern of the quality press in the different countries and also between different quality dailies within one country.

The results suggest that *The Times* and *de Volkskrant* have the strongest orientation on popular journalism as their focus has shifted from politics towards human interest. They have adopted a more human angle by consulting ordinary people more often and by increasingly choosing genres that have a tendency to showcase storytelling techniques that result in personalization and engaged stories. Conversely, *Le Figaro* and *NRC Handelsblad* show that the changing circumstances do not necessarily trigger the same developments in every quality daily. For the most part, these papers maintained their quality profile.

The developments of *de Volkskrant* and particularly *The Times* are often regarded as going down-market in order to attract a larger audience, which is generally equated with dumbing down. However, by pointing to the emergence of an alternative conception of journalism practice that is more in line with the affordances of postmodern society, scholars have argued that such conclusions are rash, ignore the dynamic nature of journalistic standards, and lack the necessary nuance to cement such an assessment. Such critique shows that it is firstly important to offer a detailed analysis of the developments in journalism before it is possible to draw conclusions about its level of quality. Moreover, with the existence of competing conceptions of journalism, even after such a detailed analysis people can still dispute each other's conclusions depending on the professional framework they subscribe to. In the following chapter, I will delve deeper into this clash through an in-depth analysis of several examples of reportages that can be typified as forms of featurized journalism.



# Making it personal

## Revisiting subjectivity in reporting

### Introduction

The previous chapter has shown that the multifaceted nature of the journalistic developments between the 1980s and the first decade of the new millennium are too often sold short by equating them with the tabloidization, i.e. dumbing down of journalism. Because the pejorative nature of tabloidization as a concept and its lacking nuance, I rather use the term ‘featurized journalism’ as it moves away from this simplifying and normative perspective on the journalistic developments of the last few decades. The suggested disparities between the dailies with regard to the integration of featurized journalism indicate the pluriformity of the way different newspapers in the respective countries have dealt with the changing circumstances within the media landscape. They have come up with divergent answers to their shared attempt to stay appealing and trustworthy to the readership. The results of the content analysis offers support for the idea that in this period an alternative perspective on the professional standards and journalism’s role in society developed. This emerging conception of journalism, which is more in line with the conceptualization of truth, reality and its representation in postmodern society, offers a challenge for the influential framework of high modernism that Hallin described.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter delves further into this struggle between these diverging perspectives on journalism within postmodern society, particularly in relation to storytelling. The focus on the use of storytelling techniques sheds an interesting light on the way quality journalism incorporates elements of reporting, like personal experience and human emotion, that within the objectivity regime are associated with popular journalism. Within this context I will argue that the presence of such techniques within a quality journalism framework is often, partly strategically, connected to more marginal, but esteemed forms of literary or narrative journalism. That way its divergence from forms of soft news with the reputation of being superficial and sensational is emphasized. Yet, like the oppositions I mentioned earlier, such an emphasis on the binary nature of this dichotomy draws the attention away from the fact that both forms of journalism share common ground with regard to the storytelling techniques they employ. Considering both literary journalism and soft news stories as forms of featurized journalism opens up a perspective in which the use of storytelling techniques in journalistic discourse in general is scrutinized instead of only examining them separately within the normative framework of either soft news or literary journalism. This broader, more inclusive perspective does more justice to the way popular and quality journalism interact and exchange forms as they are ultimately part of the same discourse.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hallin, “Passing of the “high modernism,”” 14-16; cf. Schudson, “Please hold still,” 193-199; Conboy, “The popular press: surviving postmodernity,” 45-46.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Steensen, “Featurization,” 49-50; Frank Harbers, “Different Forms of Featurized Journalism,” in *Retelling Journalism. Conveying Stories in a Digital Age*, ed. Marcel Broersma & Chris Peters (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 6-13.

As both the results of the previous chapter and prior research indicate, the developments with regard to storytelling have manifested the strongest within the genre of the reportage.<sup>3</sup> For that reason I have conducted a narrative analysis of a body of reportages of quality dailies in the three countries that fit in with the characteristics of featurized journalism. Concentrating on quality dailies offers the possibility to show how current forms of quality reporting incorporate storytelling techniques that are often seen in popular journalistic accounts within a quality framework. I have focused on award-winning reporters of quality dailies who capitalize on storytelling techniques. That way I can see how these techniques are used within a framework of quality journalism. In Great Britain I have analyzed a selection of reportages by esteemed foreign correspondent Robert Fisk. In the Netherlands I have looked at the accounts of Joris Luyendijk and at the reportages by novelist-reporter Arnon Grunberg. Because of the double role of the latter as a literary writer and a journalist his work in particular sheds light on the discursive boundaries of journalism. Finally, in France I have analyzed the reportages by Delphine Minoui and Adrien Jaulmes. Although some of these reporters - I will justify my selection more elaborately in a later section of this chapter - have been associated with literary journalism, I have left the question aside to what extent these accounts can be considered literary. As I will argue, the division of narrative journalism in literary and non-literary, which is conflated with quality and popular forms of narrative journalism, obscures the attention for the discursive interaction between popular and quality journalism and the possible similarities in their use of storytelling techniques. The qualitative approach has enabled me to gain insight in the way the narrative techniques these reporters employ, undermine the opposition between soft and hard news and in varying degrees respectively stretch or reconceptualize the professional standards of (quality) journalism. The selection of reportages should not be seen as a representative cross section of journalism after the millennium, but rather as an exploration of the role storytelling techniques play in featurized journalism against the background of the competing conceptions of journalism within postmodern society.

The previous chapter shows that the reportage among other genres associated with featurized journalism has gained ground in some of the quality newspapers. Yet, because of the broad nature of the quantitative categories, I could not prove the claim of previous research that personal experience and emotions had come to play a more prominent role in these genres. Based on my qualitative inquiry into the reportage I argue - with caution - that the selection and analysis of the reportages for this case study show some evidence to support this claim. It seems that within the reportage the focus on storytelling techniques has become stronger, subsequently expressing a revaluation of emotions and subjectivity within quality journalism. With regard to the discursive form, this means that these examples of quality journalism draw closer to the characteristics of popular journalism. Yet, this does not mean that the opposition between popular and quality journalism is gone. Rather, it suggests that what encapsulates quality journalism within postmodern society is broadened and that there is less consensus about what it exactly encompasses.

This diversification of quality journalism is reflected in the varying characteristics of the reportages I have analyzed. The accounts can be divided in two main types, which I will discuss more in detail later on in this chapter. The first type might stretch the boundaries of the objectivity regime slightly by integrating more personal experiences, emotions, and value judgment (sometimes the sentiments of the reporter also shine through implicitly), but its adherence to the formal characteristics of the objectivity regime is maintained. This links up to the earlier discussed claim of Wahl-Jorgenson that this "strategic ritual of emotionality" is tacitly accepted within the framework

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3 Steensen, "Featurization," 55.

of objective journalism, but “rarely explicitly acknowledged because it is at odds with journalistic self-understandings.”<sup>4</sup> Emotions are considered to be the antithesis of journalism’s rationalized presentation of information that is considered central to journalism’s role as facilitating rational debate in democracy.<sup>5</sup> The type of reportage in this vein fits in with Zelizer’s fourth - and final - phase in the historic development of eyewitness reporting. In that phase, journalists circumvent the problematic subjectivity of an eyewitness reporter within the objectivity paradigm by outsourcing this subjectivity to the consulted sources.<sup>6</sup>

However, the second type of reportage suggests that Zelizer’s categorization might be in need of an additional phase, where eyewitness reporting by the reporter him- or herself is (re)gaining prominence in postmodern society. Subsequently, such personalized reportages offer a more explicit challenge to the objectivity regime as they openly object to the detachment and depersonalization of objective journalism. In these accounts the mediating subjectivity of the reporter returns as the organizing principle, thereby acknowledging the inherent subjectivity and particularity of any representation of reality. Yet, these openly subjective accounts show that the degree to which the objectivity regime is undercut can vary. Some reportages adopt a personal gaze that expresses a ‘naïve’ belief in the positivistic assumptions of eyewitness reporting about the trustworthy nature of the senses in the representation of reality. Others convey a personal outlook on reality that expresses and cultivates an unremitting epistemological doubt of exactly such positivistic claims. Whereas the former is not that remote from the assumptions underlying objective journalism, in the sense that it still subscribes to the possibility to convey a coherent truth, the latter fits in with the far-reaching ideas about truth and representation of reality typical for philosophic or literary postmodernism.<sup>7</sup> Still, journalism’s dependence on its status as privileged discourse with regard to the truth keeps on restricting the forms in which reality can be portrayed. As I will illustrate in this chapter, this premise keeps most journalists from shifting to a radically reflective form of journalism, in which even the most fundamental assumptions about the ability of journalism’s epistemological tools to represent reality truthfully are questioned.<sup>8</sup> In either case, the representation of reality has passed through the filters of personal experience and moral judgment of the reporter. However, the way the mediating subjectivity of the reporter is shaped still conveys considerable disparities in the alternative conception of journalism they put forward.<sup>9</sup> These differences in the way the professional framework revolving around objectivity is challenged, support Best and Kellner’s argument that postmodern society is characterized by the amalgam and mash-up of perspectives on truth production that exist alongside of each other.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to my case studies in previous chapters, the focus is less on the national differences. Although I do tentatively suggest certain possible differences between the different countries, the exploratory nature of this inquiry and the fact that these developments are taking place at this very moment make it hard to draw conclusions in this respect. In the earlier situated case studies I could base the selection of the reporters on more previous research into the way these reporters were positioned within journalistic discourse. Unfortunately, such information is in this contemporary case either absent or because of the recent nature of the developments highly provisional. For that

4 Wahl-Jorgenson, “Strategic ritual of emotionality,” 2.

5 Wahl-Jorgenson, “Strategic ritual of emotionality,” 131-132.

6 Zelizer, B. (2003). “On ‘Having Been There,’” 421-425.

7 These developments can also be discerned in other forms of media, like documentary and television, cf. Jon Dovey, *Freakshow: First Person Media and Factual Television* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 28-54.

8 For a condensed version of this argument, cf. Harbers & Broersma, “Between Engagement and Ironic Ambiguity,” [online first].

9 Cf. Wahl-Jorgenson, “Strategic ritual of emotionality,” 2; Steensen, “Featurization,” 51-55.

10 Best & Kellner, *The postmodern turn*, 31-32.

reason I have rather tried to identify the different textual forms of the reportage. The fact that I use certain reporters from one country to illustrate a particular form therefore does not necessarily mean that that form is only present in that country.

## Journalism, *I*-pistemology and postmodern society and culture

This revaluation of subjectivity and emotion links up to the notion of 'truthiness', which has been coined by Stephen Colbert, the host of the satirical news show 'The Colbert Report', whose character in the show is a parody of the more emotional approach to journalism. Truthiness refers to the growing popularity of a notion of truth that is based on emotions rather than fact verification. As Colbert puts it in his show: "we are divided between those who think with their head and those who know with their heart".<sup>11</sup> Rather than presenting depersonalized accounts that pretend to mirror social reality objectively, journalists who embrace truthiness "feel the news at you".<sup>12</sup> From a more scholarly perspective the notion is regarded as challenging the existence of 'objective' facts and showing how fact, story and value are intricately and inextricably related to each other. Truthiness explains the possible consequences of doubts that have arisen in postmodern society of the positivist perspective on how knowledge is generated and facts are constructed for journalism.<sup>13</sup> As objectivity as a norm is losing its dominance and credibility, journalists are looking for new ways to convey reality that maintain or reclaim their cultural authority.

Yet, like tabloidization, truthiness as a notion has a clearly pejorative connotation and offers a rather narrow perspective on forms of subjective, personal or emotional reporting. It links up to other pejorative terms, like 'fact-free politics' and 'post-fact society' that have emerged and emphasize the negative effects of the decline of the influential positivist framework of knowledge production, in which the objectivity regime in journalism is also situated. However, as I have already discussed briefly, scholars like Greenberg have criticized this one-sided perspective by pointing to the opportunities these subjective forms of journalism offer as long as journalists put in enough effort in reporting, fact verification and background research to convey a truthful story.<sup>14</sup> To get away from the pejorative nature of the aforementioned notions, Van Zoonen has coined the term '*I*-Pistemology', encompassing different forms of knowledge production in which personality and individuality play a central role: "the self [has become] the source and arbiter of all truth."<sup>15</sup> She argues that this perspective on truth, reality and knowledge production, which has gained terrain within postmodern society, undermines the public trust in institutions like science, journalism, but also politics.<sup>16</sup>

The analysis of Van Zoonen is strongly indebted to the research by Beck and Giddens into the way such institutions function within contemporary society.<sup>17</sup> The basis of the credibility of these domains and their institutional organization resides in their promise to a progressively improving society in terms of personal freedom, health, safety and wealth. To fulfill this promise, these institutions rely on a long critical-rational tradition that already emerged in the Enlightenment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which has developed into a strong belief in a value-free, objective truth and merits rational debate and research. According to Beck and Giddens, postmodern society is characterized

<sup>11</sup> Stephen Colbert, "The Colbert Report," *Comedy Central*, October 17, 2005 [Consultable at: [www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/24039/october-17-2005/the-word---truthiness](http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/24039/october-17-2005/the-word---truthiness) (last accessed on February 15, 2014)].

<sup>12</sup> Colbert, "The Colbert Report." [www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/24039/october-17-2005/the-word---truthiness](http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/24039/october-17-2005/the-word---truthiness).

<sup>13</sup> Ettema, "Moment of Truthiness," 120-123.

<sup>14</sup> Greenberg, "Personal experience, turned outward," 153-155.

<sup>15</sup> Van Zoonen, "*I*-Pistemology," 56-57.

<sup>16</sup> Van Zoonen, "*I*-Pistemology," 57-60.

<sup>17</sup> Their focus is mainly on politics, but use their analysis to illustrate more general tendencies within contemporary society.

by a growing doubt of the ability of these institutions to live up to their promise of general progress. According to Beck, postmodern society recognizes the impossibility of the joined effort of the different institutions to grasp every aspect of society and to keep it under control. The modern claim to unambiguous certainty about the way society was organized and how knowledge was produced is challenged in postmodern society. Professionals, like politicians, scholars, and also journalists, are losing authority, because for every assessment they make a counter-assessment can be found. As a result the routines and methods of knowledge production become hollowed out.<sup>18</sup> This has not resulted in the rejection of such 'modern' institutions altogether, but to what Beck calls the "self-opening of the monopoly on truth" or the "demonopolization of expertise".<sup>19</sup> With this he means that the traditional domains of knowledge production have become more pervasive and that the accepted forms in which knowledge is disseminated are complemented with new ones.

[T]he demand is for forms and forums of consensus-building co-operation among industry, politics, science and the populace. For that to happen, however, the model of unambiguous instrumental rationality must be abolished. [...] Negotiation and mediation institutions [like journalism, FH] of this type must experiment with novel procedures, decision-making structures, overlaps of competence and incompetence and multiple jurisdictions.<sup>20</sup>

In the higher educated spheres of society, this doubt is in part infused by a growing mistrust of its underlying epistemological foundations rooted in the positivistic perspective on knowledge production, and it subsequently leaves less and less mutual ground to arrive at a consensus of the 'correct' way to describe and interpret reality. It can be seen as a conscious shift from the belief in the possibility to provide one privileged and coherent perspective on the world - *grand récit* in terms of Lyotard - to a view on reality that acknowledges and accepts the existence of a variety of inherently finite and partial representations and perspectives on reality - *petit histoires*.<sup>21</sup>

Lash emphasizes the influence of this type of reflection, rooted in philosophic and literary postmodernism, within postmodern society. He points out that it is part of a recurring critique on the strong belief in the affordances of reason and the subsequent progressivism that is rooted in it, which has influenced modern society at large.<sup>22</sup> Yet, Beck and Giddens argue that such intellectual reflections can, but do not necessarily have to accompany the feelings of doubt about the way politics, science or journalism function that characterize postmodern society. According to Beck, the demonopolization of truth can have diverging consequences. The declining authority of the traditional institutions and subsequently the growing feeling of uncertainty can lead to a growing reflection on the assumptions about rationality underlying modern society in an attempt to reform the way knowledge is produced. Yet, it can also lead to the adoption of a non-reflective, anti-rational and what some would call naïve and commonsensical perspective on truth.<sup>23</sup> A good example is the

18 Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 8-12.

19 Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 25, 29; Anthony Giddens, "Living in a Post-Traditional Society," in *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, ed. Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens & Scott Lash (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 83-91.

20 Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 29-30.

21 Bertens & D'haen, *Het postmodernisme in de literatuur*, 34-37; Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*, 31-37, 65-72, 79-80; Nina von Dahler, *The Ethical Foundations of Postmodernity - Communicative Reality and Relative Individuals in Theory and North American Literature* (Hamburg, [n.p.], 2012), 29-36.

22 For a more elaborate discussion of the roots of modernity, see: Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*, 65-82, 87-89; cf. Jochen Schmidt, "Einleitung: Aufklärung, Gegenklärung, Dialektik der Aufklärung," in *Aufklärung und Gegenklärung in der Europäischen Literatur. Philosophie und Politik von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Jochen Schmidt (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), 1-33.

23 Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 31-33, 177, 181-182.

rise of populist politics in the recent decades.<sup>24</sup> Because these different perspectives on the failing traditionally legitimized domains of truth co-exist alongside each other, knowledge production in general is reshaped in postmodern society into a more modest, cautious and open-ended process:

Doubt, for instance, which not only serves science but now, applied reflexively, disrupts and destroys the latter's false and fragile clarities and pseudo-certainties, could become the standard for a new modernity which starts from the principles of precaution and reversibility. Contrary to a widespread mistake, doubt makes everything - science, knowledge, criticism or morality - possible once again, only different, a couple of sizes smaller, more tentative, personal, colourful and open to social learning.<sup>25</sup>

Beck clearly emphasizes the opportunities of these developments rather than only pointing to the possible detriments. Whereas in modern society such fundamental doubts about the possibility of a unifying and monolithic understanding of the reality was always felt as a loss, the rejection of this idea is embraced as an opportunity - or liberation even - within the context of postmodern society and culture. This relates to the competing conceptions of journalism I have discussed.<sup>26</sup>

The demonopolization of truth that Beck describes offers a fruitful framework to interpret the developments within journalism. It can explain the declining authority of the objectivity regime and the (re)emergence of a range of alternative forms of reporting, suggesting that the uniform consensual stability of high modernism in journalism is challenged. The ideal of objective truth is undermined, because oppositions, like fact vs. value, detachment vs. engagement, neutrality vs. commitment, private vs. public, hard news vs. soft news and information vs. entertainment have been undercut. As a result the criteria of what constitutes quality journalism have lost self-evidence and are more open for negotiation than ever.<sup>27</sup> As I have shown in the previous chapter some scholars and journalists have maintained their orientation on the objectivity regime and therefore perceive this renewed uncertainty as a profound loss and as a deterioration of quality journalism. Yet, others are more optimistic - or at least less pessimistic - with regard to the opportunities it offers to reshape and improve quality journalism in a way that is more befitting of the changing circumstances within contemporary society.

## Debating alternative conceptions of journalism

The collapse of high modernism in journalism is illustrated by several press critiques that have been published in the recent years by journalists such as Nick Davies (*Flat Earth News*), Joris Luyendijk (*Het zijn net mensen* [*People like us*, FH]) and Rob Wijnberg (*De nieuwsfabriek* [*The News Factory*, FH]). All three authors charge journalism with the inability to live up its claims with regard to truth and the representation of reality. Aside from praise, the three authors have been criticized for portraying an overly negative image of mainstream journalism. Especially, Luyendijk met with fierce critique. In direct response to Luyendijk's book, several experienced foreign correspondents compiled a volume of essays, in which they countered or nuanced Luyendijk's critique, defending journalism's ability

<sup>24</sup> Ulrich Beck, "Self-Dissolution and Self-Endangerment of Industrial Society: What Does This Mean?," in *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, ed. Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens & Scott Lash (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 182.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 33.

<sup>26</sup> Ulrich Beck, "Self-Dissolution and Self-Endangerment of Industrial Society," 177; cf. Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*, 32-33.

<sup>27</sup> Conboy, "The Popular Press: Surviving Postmodernity," 45-50; Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 60.

to provide a truthful and trustworthy image of reality. Such a response can be interpreted as a form of paradigm repair with which these journalists try to safeguard journalism's privileged position with regard to truth.<sup>28</sup> As part of this strategy some of them pointed to his lack of proper journalistic education and experience, thereby disqualifying him as some kind of amateur, who did not know the tricks of the trade in order to live up to the required professional standards.<sup>29</sup>

That Luyendijk's book roused the most commotion is not that surprising as his critique was the most fundamental of all three authors.<sup>30</sup> Still, all three authors start off with a similar diagnosis. They argue that the objectivity regime within the recent decades has become a hollow, formulaic version that cannot live up to its own claim of providing an accurate depiction of reality. By hiding behind the objectivity ideal journalists can get away with a journalism practice that is not aimed at actually verifying and telling the truth.<sup>31</sup> Davies, Luyendijk en Wijnberg lay the blame for the collapse of the quality standards to a large extent with the cutthroat commercial competition within the media field. Davies for instance points to the last generation of media-owners, like Rupert Murdoch, who have rationalized the journalistic production process up to a level that it has become impossible to live up to the norms that it upholds and turns into "assembly-line journalism".<sup>32</sup> Because of that, norms such as factuality, fairness and balance have become a travesty of the way they were originally intended and are reduced to getting quotes that support both sides within a certain controversy without thoroughly researching their merit.<sup>33</sup> As Luyendijk shows, there are commercial incentives underlying this development that lead individual journalist into such temptation:

And here is the dilemma. As a journalist you are often successful with things that are opposite to your professional ethics but that you know you will get away with. Within journalism there is a giant tension between short-term individual self-interest and long-term collective interest, and our system often rewards the behaviour that undercuts the system in the long run. Put differently: journalists function within a context in which you are encouraged on almost all levels to do something else than what your organisation officially strives for. In other words: you promise an accurate, balanced and objective image of reality - the news - and what you provide is an exaggerated, partial and one-sided image, because that's the way you score points.<sup>34</sup>

Although such journalists provide a partial and partisan image of reality, they shape their account in concordance with the textual conventions of the objectivity regime. According to Luyendijk, the authority of the formal characteristics of objective journalism mask the fact that the commercial goals of a media outlet trigger individual journalists to create scoops and controversies in which they bypass the professional standards that are supposed to underlie the textual conventions of objectivity.

The three authors might state a similar diagnosis with regard to contemporary journalism, but that is where the comparison ends. Their antidote for this journalistic trend conveys considerable

28 Cf. Broersma, "Refractured Paradigm," 28-44.

29 Monique van Hoogstraten & Eva Jinek, "Het was op het journaal," in *Het maakbare nieuws. Antwoord op Joris Luyendijk: buitenlandcorrespondenten over hun werk*, ed. Monique van Hoogstraten & Eva Jinek (Amsterdam: Balans, 2008), 13.

30 Cf. Broersma, M. (2010). "Unbearable limitations," 23.

31 Davies, *Flat Earth News*, 108-111; Joris Luyendijk, *Het zijn net mensen. Beelden uit het midden-oosten* (Amsterdam: Podium, 2006), 203-215; Rob Wijnberg, *De Nieuwsfabriek: hoe de media ons wereldbeeld vervormen* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2013), 9-37.

32 Davies, *Flat Earth News*, 110.

33 Davies, *Flat Earth News*, 108-146.

34 Joris Luyendijk, *De kloof tussen beeldvorming en werkelijkheid*, talk given on January 24, 2007 at the symposium 'Context' organized by the Council for Societal Development [Consultable at: [www.adviesorgaan-rmo.nl/dsresource?objectid=31118&type=org](http://www.adviesorgaan-rmo.nl/dsresource?objectid=31118&type=org), last consulted on June 9, 2013].



differences in their perspective on journalism. *Flat Earth News* can be read as a continuous lament of the disintegration of the professional framework and institutional organization during the period of high modernism in journalism. Davies critiques the objectivity regime as a framework that has lost its merits under the contemporary circumstances. In his eyes, it has transformed into nothing more than a textual façade without any correspondence to the fundamental aim of safeguarding thorough and truthful reporting.<sup>35</sup> Davies especially takes issue with the norm of neutrality, which is central to the objectivity regime. He argues that objectivity is generally equated with neutrality, which especially within the contemporary media landscape actually thwarts truth verification.<sup>36</sup> What he envisions is a journalism practice in which journalists have the time to find out what is really true:

All stories have to view reality from some particular point of view - just like somebody walking into a room has to view it from a particular point. The story can't be everywhere at once. Good, healthy news organizations make these judgments case by case, selecting the story and the angle and the language and the presentation which is most likely to reveal what is most important. They do it without restricting those judgments to the demands of any ideology or owner or advertiser or government or any overarching influence. They do it knowing that other options are available. They do it 'honestly'.<sup>37</sup>

Davies longs for a journalism that dares to weigh perspectives and in the end decides on the best one. Subsequently he envisions a journalism that frees the means and the time to do so, not dominated by its commercial goals. Apart from the norm of neutrality, Davies stays faithful to the maxims of the objectivity regime. He clearly believes in the possibility to choose rightly between the different perspective on reality and expresses trust in a journalism practice that independently reports the facts in a detached manner.<sup>38</sup>

Luyendijk en Wijnberg challenge the objectivity regime more fundamentally, and basically consider it “a voice from the past.”<sup>39</sup> They both put forward alternative perspectives on the future of journalism, which show quite some similarities and link up to Van Zoonen's notion of *I-Pistemology*. In an introductory article about his new journalistic online platform, *De Correspondent*, Wijnberg declared the ‘death’ of objectivity in favor of a more personally engaged journalism practice. He argues that there is an increasing generational watershed that is typified by the divergence in their attitude towards the objectivity regime. Wijnberg argues that contrary to the older generation, its younger counterpart has freed itself from any party allegiance or self-evident adherence to a certain ideology. Echoing ideas of Beck and Giddens, Wijnberg suggests that this is indicative for the doubt this generation fosters towards the authority of traditional institutions, such as science, politics and journalism, and the rational-positivistic foundations of their truth claim. They rather invest their trust in specific people based on the knowledge and experience they have with their personality, convictions, and authenticity.

<sup>35</sup> Davies, *Flat Earth News*, 108-148.

<sup>36</sup> Davies, *Flat Earth News*, 109.

<sup>37</sup> Davies, *Flat Earth News*, 108.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Davies, *Flat Earth News*, 108-109, 361-363; Broersma has made a similar argument about Davies' book, although he does not mention Davies' objections against neutrality, cf. Broersma, “Unbearable Limitations,” 23.

<sup>39</sup> Joris Luyendijk, “Geen nieuws, maar inzicht,” talk delivered at the ‘Johan de Wittlezing’ in 2009 [Consultable at: [www.villamedia.nl/docs/johan%20de%20witt%20lezing.pdf](http://www.villamedia.nl/docs/johan%20de%20witt%20lezing.pdf), last accessed on April 3, 2014].

Often, the opposite applies to people under thirty. It is for them at least as important who is telling something than what is being told. They don't follow 'politics' but Frits Wester of Ron Fresen [well-known political commentators, FH] on Twittter. They don't read 'the economy pages', but Ewald Engelen or Joris Luyendijk [both authors write a column on economic issues, FH]. They want, to exaggerate it a little, views, not news. Logical in a way. They have grown up in a period in which political party and ideology were traded for party leader and personality. In an era of: goodbye newspaper and broadcast, hello Facebook and Twitter. In an era in which truth is losing its static nature, but can be constantly updated. And subsequently contested in the thousands of responses below the article. For this generation, the authorities are people and their character, not institutions and their facts.<sup>40</sup>

Whether the clash between different perspectives on truth, trust and authority can really be explained in terms of generation remains to be seen, but Wijnberg's analysis of the competing conceptions of journalism links up to my argument about the 'demonopolization of truth' within postmodern society and culture. The journalism practice he envisions (re-)engages the readership by offering stories, which do not efface the reporter's mediating subjectivity but rather capitalize on it; the authority of an account is inextricably bound to the individual behind it.<sup>41</sup> Yet, Wijnberg is quick to emphasize that this should not be equated with partisan reporting or 'journalism of assertion' - a critique that has been voiced already before the platform was launched.<sup>42</sup> Although subjectivity and personality is embraced, independent truth verification remains at the heart of the reconceptualized journalism practice, showing once more how fundamental the claim to truth is for journalism's in legitimizing its practice.<sup>43</sup>

That is not to say that *De Correspondent* is partisan, or doesn't care about facts, on the contrary. Independence (in the sense that you are not secretly guided by other interests than informing the reader) and truth-squadding are the fuel of good journalism.<sup>44</sup>

What Wijnberg means is that the norms of neutrality and detachment are left behind. Instead reporters are encouraged to write accounts that show their personal motivation and fascination, in which they ultimately choose sides in a certain matter based on thorough reporting work and background research. Although the overt mediating subjectivity makes such a truth claim more modest, it does assert that it is the 'right' depiction of reality. In that sense Wijnberg still adheres to the fundamental assumption underlying journalism, i.e. that journalists have the right tools at their disposal to represent reality truthfully.

This is where Wijnberg's conception of journalism differs from Luyendijk's perspective. The latter allows for some doubt about this fundamental assumption the journalistic profession is built on. Luyendijk also makes a plea for an overt mediating subjectivity within journalistic accounts, but he does so with a different goal in mind. Whereas Wijnberg emphasizes the importance of the reporter's

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- <sup>40</sup> Rob Wijnberg, "Waarom een verhaal niet zonder verteller kan," *De Correspondent*, April 13, 2013 [Consultable at: <http://blog.dec correspondent.nl/post/47858813554/waarom-een-verhaal-niet-zonder-verteller-kan>, last consulted on April 3, 2014].
- <sup>41</sup> Wijnberg, "Waarom een verhaal niet zonder verteller kan."; A similar example can be found in *De Nieuwe Pers*, People did not subscribe to the entire paper, but only followed their reporters of choice. Although the paper recently merged with The Post Online this way of subscribing is still available.
- <sup>42</sup> Dan Gillmor, *We the Media. Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People* (Sebastopol: O'Reilly, 2004), 135-136; For critique on *De Correspondent*, cf. Chris Aalberts, "De Correspondent heeft al een mooie site, nu de inhoudelijke visie nog," *De Nieuwe Reporter*, September 9, 2013.
- <sup>43</sup> Cf. Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 31.
- <sup>44</sup> Wijnberg, "Waarom een verhaal niet zonder verteller kan."

expression of his individual perspective on the world to re-engage the readers, Luyendijk calls for a more reflective way of reporting. He envisions a journalism practice, in which the process of reporting is integrated and reflected on in the text.<sup>45</sup>

The paradigmatic change has to be, I think, that papers are no longer concerned with news, but with insight. Not what is happening, but what is at stake. You use the news as an incentive, as an eye-catching coat rack for the stories about the world itself. And you constantly explain to you readers what you are doing, and why.<sup>46</sup>

This way reporters can be open about any problems they have with truth verification due to particular conditions - like operating within a dictatorship or having to deal with strong lobby groups - or any shortcomings of their journalistic routines in general to interpret the world. In turn, the reader can trace the way a story is constructed and can therefore make a better informed assessment of its truth value. Such a journalism practice reshapes the generally closed-off process of representing reality into a more open and tentative exchange of observations and views with the audience. Such reflection on the journalistic process journalism highlights its own conventional nature. Moreover, by pointing out inherent shortcomings in the representation of reality can even problematize the relation between reality and the textual representation journalism provides, thereby undercutting the authority of journalism's truth claim.<sup>47</sup>

The positions of Davies, Wijnberg and Luyendijk with regard to the representation of reality each relate to the distinction David Eason made between ethnographic reality and cultural phenomenology in his research into New Journalism. According to Eason the journalistic accounts New Journalism encompasses can be divided into two groups, each adhering to a different perspective on the representation of reality. These notions also offer a fruitful framework for the contemporary journalistic context. Yet, rather than a binary opposition they should be regarded as two ideal types on opposite ends of a gliding scale on which intermediate positions are also possible. Both notions refer to a conception of journalism that acknowledges the chaotic nature of the world, the complexity of society, and the inherent subjectivity and partiality of any attempt to represent reality. Yet, journalism practice in the tradition of ethnographic realism attempts to help its audience understand reality by uncovering some kind of underlying structure, which helps to give meaning to the matters under consideration. Ultimately, it thus expresses faith in the journalist's ability to represent reality in a truthful way. Conversely, cultural phenomenology problematizes this faith by foregrounding the conventional nature of journalism's attempt to represent reality.<sup>48</sup> As Eason puts it:

Ethnographic reality reflects faith in the capability of traditional models of interpretation and expression [...] to reveal the real. Although the reports acknowledge cultural relativism in their attention to the various symbolic worlds of their subjects, this awareness is not extended to the process of reporting which is treated as a natural process. Cultural phenomenology calls attention to reporting as a way of joining together writer and reader in the creation of reality. Narrative techniques call attention to storytelling as a cultural practice for making a common world.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>45</sup> To a certain extent this might be a difference in degree, for Wijnberg also acknowledges that the complexities of the world cannot be captured fully in a story. Moreover, he leaves the opportunity for multiple interpretations to exist next to each other. Nevertheless, he does not stress the integration of reflection on journalism's own conventions within the stories.

<sup>46</sup> Luyendijk, "Geen nieuws, maar inzicht."

<sup>47</sup> Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 21-24.

<sup>48</sup> Eason, "Image-World," 52-55.

<sup>49</sup> Eason, "Image-World," 53.

Thus, in spite of their acknowledgement that an objective representation of reality is impossible and that reality is perceived differently, journalists writing within the tradition of ethnographic realism nonetheless rely on their rational-positivistic reporting routines to attempt to uncover what they ultimately accept as their version of truth. The way Davies and Wijnberg envision journalism fits in best with the tradition of ethnographic realism, whereas Luyendijk's emphasis on a reflective journalism practice comes closer to cultural phenomenology. Yet, as my analysis also suggests, Muhlmann argues that the importance of journalism's truth claim for its cultural authority, its appeal to the readership, and for its professional autonomy keeps most reporters almost always in bounds with the tradition of ethnographic realism.<sup>50</sup>

## The appeal of the narrative form

The alternative conceptions of journalism that Wijnberg and Luyendijk outline implicitly or explicitly link up to traditions of storytelling in journalism. Their revaluation of subjectivity relates to the often praised tradition of narrative and literary journalism, investigative reporting, but they are also reminiscent of the storytelling techniques employed by less esteemed forms of popular journalism. In a period in which the objectivity regime and its underlying rational-critical tradition of positivism is being challenged, it is not that surprising that the attention and popularity of more openly subjective narrative forms of journalism story might be more appealing and more convincing to some part of the readership.

As mentioned before, it is not the first time that journalists have turned to storytelling techniques. Apart from the fact that before the objectivity regime became dominant storytelling techniques were still quite common in journalism in Europe, the New Journalism of the 1960s and 1970s is the most famous example of the use of storytelling techniques to challenge the authority of the objectivity regime.<sup>51</sup> This period shows quite some similarities with the current developments within journalism. Yet, the New Journalism remained a marginal influence on mainstream journalism and did not have a strong impact on the growing dominance of the objectivity regime as a professional framework. The New Journalists gained esteem for the value of their work, but for the mainstream quality media their work was rather perceived as an example of untrustworthy journalism.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, their stable professional status within society and the commercial prosperity did not offer much incentive to adapt their professional framework.

Conversely, within the contemporary the declining dominance of the objectivity regime together with the troubling commercial climate has made journalism across the board more susceptible for such alternative conceptions and forms of journalism.<sup>53</sup> Traditional mainstream quality media outlets, such as dailies and broadcast companies have been experimenting almost on a trial and error basis with new journalistic forms on many levels in order to reconnect to the public - maybe most clearly illustrated by the recent emergence of 'journalism labs'.<sup>54</sup> They are adapting their news production to the internet and more recently introduced technologies like tablets and mobile phones. Exploring and exploiting the possibilities of these 'new' media could help them cope with the increasing speed with which newsworthy information is disseminated and updated nowadays. It furthermore offers

<sup>50</sup> Instead of ethnographic realism Muhlmann rather talks about these traditions in terms of the unifying and decentering journalist, cf. Muhlmann, *Political History*, 28-33.

<sup>51</sup> Eason, "New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture," 142-146; Pauly, "Politics of the New Journalism, 121-125.

<sup>52</sup> Eason, "Journalistic Authority," 437-439.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Broersma & Peters, "Introduction," 2-3.

<sup>54</sup> See, for example: [www.niemanlab.org](http://www.niemanlab.org); [www.journalismlab.nl](http://www.journalismlab.nl); [www.j-lab.org](http://www.j-lab.org); <http://en.ejo.ch>, and [www.chaire-convergences.info](http://www.chaire-convergences.info).

them more opportunities to interact with their readership.<sup>55</sup> These developments mostly pertain to attempts that aim to get the newsworthy information to the public quickly and concisely.

Simultaneously, quality journalism has also explored the possibilities of 'slow journalism' as a way of maintaining and appealing readership. It is particularly within this context that the 'demonopolization of truth' seems to interact with the dire need to find new forms that appeal to the audience.<sup>56</sup> Subsequently, the attention for storytelling, in which detached and rationalized description is replaced with a reliance on personal experience and emotion, has increased.<sup>57</sup> In other words, the opportunities that accompany the use of storytelling techniques have become part of the mainstream debate on journalism's future. Apart from the growing scholarly attention for forms of narrative journalism and for the opportunities of storytelling techniques within journalism,<sup>58</sup> this claim is supported by the growing attention for storytelling in journalism education,<sup>59</sup> and by the emergence of more and more (digital) platforms for and about narrative journalism.<sup>60</sup>

The idea that narrative forms of journalism are gaining cultural authority is reinforced by the recent popularity of book length non-fiction - often called literary journalism - and literary authors that show an interest in current affairs or are preoccupied with the relation between fiction and non-fiction and literature's connection to reality. Especially within literature these developments are rather recent and not yet thoroughly researched, which makes it is necessary to be cautious about their extent. Still, several scholars have pointed to the growing amount of 'border traffic' between journalism and literature.<sup>61</sup> Within this context, scholars often point to the literary manifesto *Reality Hunger* by David Shields, in which he argues for a collapse of the fiction vs. nonfiction boundaries in literature. In response to postmodern relativism with regard to the possibility of providing a truthful representation of or meaningful perspective on reality, certain authors try to find or reflect on new ways of representing reality in a truthful matter. This is reflected in the deliberate strategy of some of these authors to confuse the status of their work by playing with the conventions of journalism

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- 55 Cf. Mark Deuze & Jo Bardoel, "Network Journalism: Converging Competences of Old and New Media Professionals," *Australian Journalism Review* 23, no.2 (2001): 91-103; Todd Graham, "Talking back, but is anyone listening?," in *Rethinking journalism. Trust and Participation in a Transformed News Landscape*, ed. Chris Peters & Marcel Broersma (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 115-117.
- 56 Cf. Van Zoonen, "I-Pistemology," 60-62; Steensen, "Featurization," 59-60; Thomas Vaessens, "Making Overtures: Literature and Journalism, 1968 and 2011 - A Dutch Perspective," *Literary Journalism Studies* 3, no.2 (2011): 64-68.
- 57 Recent high-profile examples are the cross-media narrative 'Firestorm' by *The Guardian*, 'Snow Fall' by *The New York Times*, but such productions were around longer. Cf. Harro Kraak, "Snowfallen is hip: een lijst met voorbeelden," *De Nieuwe Reporter*, August 13, 2013 [Consultable at: [www.denieuwereporter.nl/2013/08/snowfallen-is-hip-een-lijst-met-voorbeelden](http://www.denieuwereporter.nl/2013/08/snowfallen-is-hip-een-lijst-met-voorbeelden) (last accessed on January 14, 2014)].
- 58 Cf. Ettema, "Moment of Truthiness," 117-123; Dahlgren, "The Troubling Evolution of Journalism," 154; Wahl-Jorgenson, "Strategic ritual of emotionality," 141-143; Steensen, "Featurization," 49-52; S. Elizabeth Bird & Robert Dardenne, "Rethinking News and Myth and Storytelling," in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, ed. Karin Wahl-Jorgenson & Thomas Hanitsch (New York/London: Routledge, 2009), 214; Manon Quinti, *Le nouvel espace du grand reportage dans la presse écrite contemporaine: l'exemple de la revue XXI* ([n.p.]: [n.p.], 2012), 123-126 [Unpublished MA thesis]; An Ebscohost quickscan with the keywords "storytelling", "narrative journalism" and "literary journalism" showed that there were about 100 relevant articles on narrative forms within contemporary journalism of which 75 were published in 2000 or later.
- 59 Tjirk van der Ziel, "How to educate on storytelling: from follower to innovator," [unpublished] [<http://wjec.be/wp/wp-content/uploads/2B-Storytelling.pdf>]; Erik Neveu, "A New Generation of Non-Fiction Narratives as One of the Futures of Journalism," [Paper presented at the Future of Journalism Conference in Cardiff in 2013]; Gerard Smit, "Nederland ontbeert traditie van verhalende journalistiek," *Journalismlab*, October 12, 2013 [Consultable at: [www.journalismlab.nl/2013/10/waar-blijft-de-beginredactie-henken-blanken-over-verhalende-journalistiek/](http://www.journalismlab.nl/2013/10/waar-blijft-de-beginredactie-henken-blanken-over-verhalende-journalistiek/)]; Associations des journalistes professionnelles, "Journalisme narratif et nouveaux formats d'écriture," March 2, 2012 [Consultable at: [www.ajp.be/blogs/multimedia/journalisme-narratif-et-nouveaux-formats-decriture/](http://www.ajp.be/blogs/multimedia/journalisme-narratif-et-nouveaux-formats-decriture/)].
- 60 See, for example: [www.tone-app.nl/over/](http://www.tone-app.nl/over/); <http://futureofstorytelling.org/>; [www.kickstarter.com/projects/readmatter/matter](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/readmatter/matter); <http://verhalendejournalistiek.nl/>; [www.vovj.nl/cms/vakvaardigheid/verhalende-journalistiek/](http://www.vovj.nl/cms/vakvaardigheid/verhalende-journalistiek/); <http://storybird.com/>; Articles on this topic: Steve Myers, "New York Times begins weekly showcase of its best long-form journalism," *Poynter*, July 8, 2011 [Consultable at: [www.poynter.org/latest-news/mediawire/138530/new-york-times-begins-weekly-showcase-of-its-best-long-form-journalism/](http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/mediawire/138530/new-york-times-begins-weekly-showcase-of-its-best-long-form-journalism/) (accessed last on April 13, 2014)].
- 61 Cf. Thomas Vaessens, "Realiteitshonger. Arnon Grunberg en de (non-)fictie," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 126, no.3 (2010): 307-309; Steen Steensen, "The Humble I: *The Bookseller of Kabul* and Contemporary Norwegian Literary Journalism," *Literary Journalism Studies* 5, no.1 (2013): 61-80.

and fictional literature or by the tendency to choose non-fictional events as the central subject of their novels.<sup>62</sup>

In addition, the book length stories of journalists have been receiving more and more attention and critical acclaim, and there are indications that also the number of such book publications is growing.<sup>63</sup> That journalists get the opportunity to rework their journalistic work into entire books, points to the growing status of individual journalists, which fits in with the rising status of individual journalist since roughly the 1960s that Wijffes has pointed to.<sup>64</sup> In turn, the apparent success of these works had reinforced their growing status.<sup>65</sup> For some of these journalists the success of their non-fiction has allowed them to quit their regular jobs in daily journalism - or turn freelance - and mainly focus on their book-length stories.<sup>66</sup> With regard to journalism the popularity of this type of books offers some support for the growing popularity and authority of subjective experience as opposed to the detached and depersonalized representation of reality. Furthermore, it is argued that the commercial success of journalistic non-fiction and novels on the boundaries of fiction and non-fiction has strengthened the position of narrative journalism in the newspapers.<sup>67</sup>

This marriage between journalism and literature is neither self-evident nor unproblematic as both domains are nowadays commonsensically seen as each other's opposite. On an institutional level they indeed form separate semi-autonomous fields.<sup>68</sup> Yet, this distinction is also often extended - in part as the result of positioning strategies from both sides - to the discursive level: literary texts are conflated with fiction, whereas journalism is said to pertain to social reality and truth. From that perspective the stretching of the traditional boundaries of journalism and literary fiction from both sides can also be interpreted as a part of the 'demonopolization of truth' that Beck describes. Privileged discursive modes of both domains, like objective reporting or fictional storytelling respectively, are challenged and supplemented with alternatives that question the tenability of these dichotomies. As Dutch literary scholar Thomas Vaessens argues:

Writers, whether they have a background in fiction or non-fiction, appear to strive for reality, and they are looking for means to describe reality as adequately as possible. The one time these means can be found in the toolbox of the novelist, and the other in the toolbox of the journalist.<sup>69</sup>

Although it is important to realize that this 'reality hunger' does not extend to both domains in its entirety, Vaessens' analysis holds true for certain groups of journalists and novelists. For instance, a growing group of non-fiction writers - often with a history in newspaper journalism - says that apart from the critical acclaim and the financial gain there were more compelling reasons pertaining to

62 Vaessens, "Making Overtures," 60-69. Although not directly linked, several recent literary works from European and American literary authors, like *HhhH* by Laurence Binet, Jonathan Littell's *Les Bienveillantes*, or François Bon's *Daewoo* in France, Dave Eggers' *What's the What* or *Zeitoun* and *Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer in American, Ian McEwan's *Solar* or *Sweet Tooth* in Britain, and in the Netherlands Leon de Winter with *VSV* and *Onze oom* or *Huid en haar* by Arnon Grunberg fit in with this framework.

63 Han Ceelen & Jeroen van Bergeijk, *Meer dan de feiten. Gesprekken met auteurs van literaire non-fictie* (Amsterdam: Atlas, 2007); Robert Boynton, *The New New Journalism. Conversations with America's Best Nonfiction Writers on their Craft* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005); Roselyne Ringoot, "Des journalistes et des livres. Un tournant auctorial dans la pratique du journalisme?," Paper at Colóquio Internacional Mudanças Estruturais no Jornalismo, April 25, 2011.

64 Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 338-340.

65 Ceelen & Van Bergeijk, *Meer dan de feiten*, 12-16.

66 Examples of such authors are Alexandra Fuller, Rose George and Linda Grant in Britain, Geert Mak, Lieve Joris, Frank Westerman in the Netherlands, and Anne Brunswic, Florence Aubenas and Anne Nivat in France to name a few; cf. Jenny McKay, "Reportage in the U.K. A Hidden Genre?," in *Literary journalism across the globe: journalistic traditions and transnational influences*, ed. John Bak & Bill Reynolds (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 47-60.

67 Steensen, "Featurization," 55-58; Steensen, "The Humble I," 72; Cf. Ringoot, "Des journalistes," 56.

68 With regard to journalism, cf. Benson & Neveu, *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field* and with regard to literature, cf. Bourdieu, *The field of cultural production*.

69 Vaessens, "Realiteitshonger," 309.

the way they could perform their work that infused their shift to book length stories. In addition to obvious advantages like more space and more time for research and reporting, they pointed to a greater freedom in their choice of topic or theme and the way they could approach and present their material could be less conventional than in daily journalism. They appreciate the greater freedom they have with regard to subjectivity, and the use of narrative techniques to convey experiences and evoke emotions.<sup>70</sup>

French foreign correspondent for *Le Figaro* Delphine Minoui, for instance, published a book called *Moi, Nujood, 10 ans, divorcée* [*I am Nujood, Age 10 and Divorced*] about a ten year old Yemeni girl, who was married off to a man thrice her age. She had met this girl during her stay in Yemen as a foreign reporter in the preceding years and already published a reportage about her. Her book length story of Nujood was based on her reportage, but contrary to this newspaper account it told the story from the perspective of Nujood instead of Minoui. Minoui emphasizes the effort she made to do this in a trustworthy way:

Writing her story was also a challenge. I had to put myself in her shoes since the book is written as a first person account. So, for instance, when I went to the court, I sat on the floor in order to be on the same level as Nujood, and to experience things from a child's perspective: the crowd, the grown up people running here and there, the big stairs to enter the court room.<sup>71</sup>

Such a form is highly uncommon in newspaper reportages, suggesting that Minoui enjoyed more discursive freedom in her book length version. A more extreme example is Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Lorraine Adams' shift to literary fiction that is mentioned in Thomas Vaessens' article on the cross-fertilization of journalism and literature. Adams quit her job as investigative reporter at the *Washington Post*, because, as she says, fiction enables her to portray reality in all its complexities. Like many other journalists she argues that the newspaper genres can become a straitjacket that reduces reality to commonplace or even stereotypical stories.<sup>72</sup>

In turn, the manifesto by Shields challenges a similar straitjacket within the domain of literature, which more or less disarms any statement pertaining to reality in a work of fiction. This is nicely illustrated by Arnon Grunberg when he argues for a less strict dichotomy between reality and imagination - although he does not call for a removal of the distinction altogether as Shields did. In doing so he acknowledges literature's potential to make interesting statements about the reality outside the fictional story world.<sup>73</sup> In a similar vein Laurent Binet, the French author of the borderline fictional novel *HhhH* about the assault on Nazi big shot Reinhard Heydrich, stated that he deliberately wrote a self-reflective novel on a historical topic in order to be able to stay as close to the truth as possible. In his opinion the truthfulness resides in the conversation about what is true that he strikes up with his readers.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Ceelen & Van Bergeijk, *Meer dan feiten*, 28-30, 39, 58, 62, 80-81, 128-130; Boynton, *The New New Journalism*, 50-51, 70-72, 214, 231, 366-367, 411.

<sup>71</sup> "Delphine Minoui on writing I Am Nujood, Age 10 and Divorced," *Read it Forward*, [n.d.] [[www.readitforward.com/delphine-minoui-on-writing-i-am-nujood-age-10-and-divorced](http://www.readitforward.com/delphine-minoui-on-writing-i-am-nujood-age-10-and-divorced)] (last accessed on July 25, 2013)].

<sup>72</sup> Vaessens, "Making Overtures," 57.

<sup>73</sup> Johan Goud, "'De toekomst is niets dan leegte: wat zal ik eens gaan doen?'" Een gesprek met Arnon Grunberg," in *Het leven volgens Arnon Grunberg. De wereld als poppenkast*, ed. Johan Goud (Kampen: Klement, 2010), 142-147.

<sup>74</sup> Jonathan Derbyshire, "The Books Interview: Laurent Binet," *New Statesman*, May 16, 2012 [Consultable at: [www.newstatesman.com/culture/culture/2012/05/books-interview-laurent-binet](http://www.newstatesman.com/culture/culture/2012/05/books-interview-laurent-binet)] (accessed last on April 4, 2014)].

The current popularity of the books by these journalists and literary authors has not gone unnoticed in mainstream daily journalism. Editors have (re)discovered the commercial opportunities of the publication of narrative forms of journalism. Take for instance the 'longreads' - extensive stories on a certain topic often drawing heavily on storytelling techniques - quality dailies, like *NRC Handelsblad* and *The Guardian* have started to publish recently and the success narrative journalism has brought to recently established French weeklies, like *XXI*, *Muze* or *Feuilleton*.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, my analysis suggests that the popularity of these book-length forms of reporting and the preoccupation with reality that certain literary works express also reinforced a greater attention for storytelling and thus a greater discursive freedom within the articles of the quality dailies.

## Literary journalism and its conception of quality

The connection between narrative forms of journalism and literature in terms of their use of storytelling techniques is also not new - again the New Journalism is the most famous example in this respect. The explicit literary ideals of New Journalists like Tom Wolfe have led to quite some scholarly attention for the literary features of these forms of narrative journalism. This has established a research tradition - with scholars like John Hartsock, Thomas Connery, Norm Sims, Ben Yagoda and Kevin Kerrane - which distinguishes forms of 'literary journalism' within a larger body of narrative journalism. The cultural value that accompanies the adjective 'literary' can explain why literary journalism in general is hardly ever connected to popular journalism although they share the focus on the level of personal experience and emotions. In the cases that popular journalism is discussed in relation to literary journalism the focus is generally on their disparities.<sup>76</sup> Literary journalism is usually regarded as a type of journalism that covers issues in an in-depth - profound if you like - way that transcends the 'news of the day'. In other words, these narrative pieces are believed to surpass the daily issues and deal with the *condition humaine*, which earns them a longer lasting appeal.<sup>77</sup> Apart from a difference in the choice of topics and issues, this capacity is considered to reside in the polyphonic nature of these texts. They offer different angles on a news story thereby showing that multiple interpretations of an event exist alongside each other. These stories therefore defy what Hartsock has termed the "critical closure" of a story i.e. a monolithic representation of reality. In comparison, he sees such an unambiguous and definite image of the world as typical for storytelling within popular journalism and for any form of objective journalism as well.<sup>78</sup>

With such definitions scholars point to the epistemological underpinnings of literary journalism, which challenges the rational-positivistic framework of objective journalism. This type of journalism rather acknowledges the constructional character of reality and the inherent subjectivity and partiality of any representation of the world. Particularly Hartsock, who draws heavily on Bakhtin's theories about the dialogical nature of the novel, delineates literary journalism in a way that resembles Eason's definition of cultural phenomenology:

75 Cf. Bill Kirtz, "NY Times' Abramson: 'Long-form narrative is not only alive but dancing to new music,'" Poynter, May 4, 2011 [Consultable at: [www.poynter.org/latest-news/top-stories/130688/ny-times-abramson-long-form-narrative-is-not-only-alive-but-dancing-to-new-music](http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/top-stories/130688/ny-times-abramson-long-form-narrative-is-not-only-alive-but-dancing-to-new-music) (accessed last on February 25, 2014)]; Neveu, "A New Generation of Non-Fiction Narratives as One of the Futures of Journalism?" 13.

76 Cf. Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 134-143.

77 Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 11-12, 53-54; Ann Rigney, "Teksten en cultuurhistorische context," in *Het leven van teksten. Een inleiding tot de literatuurwetenschap*, ed. Kiene Brillenburg Wurth & Ann Rigney (Amsterdam: AUP, 2006), 303-304.

78 Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 48.



In its documentary concern then, narrative literary journalism has the courage to acknowledge a phenomenal world that is fundamentally indeterminate and in doing so not to reinscribe it in a cryptotheological faith.<sup>79</sup>

With this “cryptotheological faith” Hartsock means that literary journalism resists a monolithic depiction of the world and thus draws attention to the constructional character of their representations.

Scholars working in this vein - implicitly - regard literary journalism prescriptively as quality standard in opposition to narrative forms within popular journalism, which according to them depict reality in a monolithic fashion. Although I see the value of their attempt to discern quality differences, I doubt that this is a fruitful way of categorizing the different forms of narrative journalism. I would argue that adopting the characteristics of cultural phenomenology as a standard for quality excludes many forms of journalism that have been praised for the insight they offer into reality by attempting to - ultimately - give an unambiguous representation of reality.<sup>80</sup> Both Eason and Muhlmann for instance show that even Tom Wolfe, whose journalistic work of the 1960s and 1970s is widely appreciated for its in-depth perspective on the people and events he portrayed, ultimately incorporates the different views on the world he encounters within an encompassing image of reality. Muhlmann argues that particularly within journalism a depiction of reality in its inconclusive nature is problematic and only a few authors like the New Journalists Norman Mailer, Joan Didion and Hunter S. Thompson have practiced journalism in such a consequently “decentering” way.<sup>81</sup> Thus, Hartsock’s definition of what quality means within a framework of narrative journalism appears to be overly restrictive.<sup>82</sup>

Moreover, the definition of literary journalism uses the argument about the monolithic representation of reality not only to set it apart from popular journalism but also from journalism adhering to the objectivity regime. It ignores the traditional dichotomy in terms of quality between popular and quality journalism by setting up a different false binary between literary - which in this case becomes the new quality standard - and non-literary journalism. This perspective is also prescriptive with regards to the quality standards and does not allow for the degree of nuance that is necessary to look at the way storytelling techniques are related to quality standards within contemporary postmodern society. As I have already discussed, under influence of the demonopolization of truth the question what journalistic quality entails, has become subject of debate within postmodern society. This does not mean that the opposition between quality and popular forms of journalism is not still accepted in everyday life by a large part of the public, but rather that the criteria determining how the division between quality and popular journalism is made, have lost their self-evidence. As a result their boundaries have become fuzzy.

The same goes for the use of storytelling techniques by journalists. Within a period in which the self-evidence of the definitions of journalistic quality are contested and have become a subject of ongoing debate, it is my contention that a fruitful scholarly perspective on the development of the use of storytelling techniques should not on beforehand formulate a fixed set of quality standards that divides texts in either of popular or quality journalism as Hartsock does. Such an approach obscures any discursive interaction and dissemination of textual characteristics between popular and quality journalism. It fragments the research into journalism’s use of storytelling techniques and thus obscures a comprehensive image of the way the use of narrative means has developed

<sup>79</sup> Hartsock, *Literary Journalism*, 51.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Muhlmann, *Political History*, 30-33; Eason, “Image-world,” 52-53.

<sup>81</sup> Muhlmann, *Political History*, 30-33, 135-164; Eason, “Image-world,” 53-62.

<sup>82</sup> To be fair, this is not Hartsock’s primary aim. He wants to typify what constitutes literary journalism.

within journalism discourse. For that reason I argue that narrative journalism should be considered as a form of featurized journalism, opening up a perspective in which narrative journalism can be meaningfully related to other journalistic forms of storytelling.

## Award-winning quality reporters

In all three countries there are several examples of journalists who employ storytelling techniques in their newspaper accounts. Scrutinizing the narrative characteristics of such accounts elucidates their position in the debate about quality journalism within postmodern society and offers insight in the role storytelling techniques play within quality journalism. Ideally my analysis would have entailed a comparison between reportages in both quality and popular papers, which would enable me to examine how these accounts actually diverge or converge in the way they employ narrative techniques. Unfortunately, this was not possible given the extensive cross-national design of the research. I have therefore only analyzed reportages from quality papers. Based on my quantitative results and previous research into popular journalism I will point to certain similarities to illustrate the interaction between both types of journalism. These suggestions obviously need to be substantiated further through additional empirical research.

I have focused on the work of foreign correspondents or special reporters who have written reportages about the international political situation in the Middle East in the first decade of the 21st century. In my selection of the material I have looked both at the reputation of the reporters and their affinity with storytelling as I wanted to explore the different ways in which narrative techniques were employed. Furthermore, focusing on a politically charged topic like Middle East has enabled me to see whether these reporters display a different approach to what is generally considered a typical 'hard news' topic. Ultimately, such an analysis shows the divergent ways in which the articles are shaped textually, elucidating the way the competing conceptions of journalism currently present within the journalistic domain influence the reporters in the assertion of a truth claim.

In France reporters such as Serge Michel (*Le Figaro*, *Le Monde*), Marion de Renterghem (*Le Monde*), Natalie Nougayrède (*Le Monde*), Jean Hatzfeld (*Libération*), Adrien Jaulmes (*Le Figaro*) and Delphine Minoui (*Le Figaro*) among others are praised for the quality of their reportages. In this chapter I have focused on the latter two, who both have published many reportages about the situation in the Middle East. Jaulmes (1970) started his journalistic career in 1999 as an intern and later freelance journalists for *Le Figaro*. He became a permanent foreign correspondent in 2000. Between 2001 on and 2002 he wrote reportages about Afghanistan, earning him the *Prix d'Albert Londres*.<sup>83</sup> In 2007 he also received the Bayeux Calvados Award for War Correspondents for his reportages on Iraq.<sup>84</sup> He reworked his reportages on Iraq in *Amérak*, a book length non-fiction work.<sup>85</sup> For this case study I have focused on the reportages he has written on Iraq and Lebanon. To keep the amount of accounts manageable I have focused on the period between 2005 and 2007 leading up to his publication of *Amérak* and only analyzed the reportages that were longer than 750 words, which added up to 29 stories.

Delphine Minoui (1974) has had a similar career path. She started working as a journalist in 1997 for *France Culture* and since 1999 she has been a freelance correspondent based in Teheran. In 2002 she was employed by *Le Figaro* as a foreign correspondent covering the Middle East. Her reportage

<sup>83</sup> Prix Albert Londres, "Lauréat 2002," February 2, 2012, [Consultable at: [www.prixalbertlondres.com/Les-laureats/Les-laureats-du-prix-Albert-Londres-de-1999-a-2012/ArticleId/2428/Laureat-2002.aspx](http://www.prixalbertlondres.com/Les-laureats/Les-laureats-du-prix-Albert-Londres-de-1999-a-2012/ArticleId/2428/Laureat-2002.aspx), last accessed on 9 June 2013].

<sup>84</sup> See the archives on the website of the award [consultable at: [www.prixbayeux.org](http://www.prixbayeux.org), last consulted at April 4, 2014].

<sup>85</sup> Adrien Jaulmes, *Amérak* (Paris: Éditions des Équateurs, 2009).

series about Iraq and Iran that she published in *Le Figaro* in 2005 and 2006 was awarded the *Prix d'Albert Londres*.<sup>86</sup> In the years after she received the award she kept reporting on the Middle East. In 2009 she published the already mentioned non-fiction book *Moi, Nojoud, 10 ans, divorcée*. For this chapter I have analyzed 22 longer accounts she wrote about Iran and Yemen between 2005 and 2009 after she was awarded the *Prix d'Albert Londres*.

In Britain journalists such as Dan McDougall (*Sunday Times*, *The Observer*), James Meek (*The Guardian*), Christina Lamb (*Financial Times*, *Sunday Times*), Anthony Lloyd (*The Times*), Vanora Bennet (*The Times*) but maybe most of all Robert Fisk (*The Times*, *The Independent*) have earned esteem with their compelling stories. Because of his world-wide renown, I have focused on the reportages of Robert Fisk. Fisk (1946) has received numerous awards for his work: he was named International Journalists of the Year seven times and won the Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism in 2002 among many other prizes. For more than thirty years he worked as a Middle East correspondent for *The Times* and *The Independent* covering all main conflicts in the region. He is known for his critical and daring reporting and his compelling way of writing.<sup>87</sup> At several occasions he has reworked his reportages into book length stories, like *Pity the Nation* and *The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East*.<sup>88</sup> To confine the material, I have focused on the 27 longer reportages he wrote about Iraq and Lebanon for *The Independent* between 2004 and 2008. I consider the fact that Fisk wrote these reportages for a paper outside my corpus not that problematic as *The Independent* is also a quality daily and experienced a similar development pattern as *The Times* - be it some years later. *The Independent* faced severe financial problems at the end of the 1990s onward, had to switch to a tabloid or 'compact' format in 2003 and has been accused of popularization and dumbing down.<sup>89</sup>

In the Netherlands journalists such as Frank Westerman (*de Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*), Joris van Casteren (*NRC Handelsblad*), Joeri Boom (*NRC Handelsblad*), Judith Koelemeijer (*de Volkskrant*), Dick Wittenberg (*NRC Handelsblad*), Kees Broere (*de Volkskrant*), Bram Vermeulen (*NRC Handelsblad*) and Joris Luyendijk (*NRC Handelsblad*, *The Guardian*) - some of which are now full-time writers of book length non-fiction - are among the most esteemed reporters, which are often associated with narrative journalism. Because of Luyendijk's central role in the recent debates on journalism I have focused on his work and analysed the longer reportages he wrote leading up to his press critique. Luyendijk (1971) started his journalistic career in 1998 with *de Volkskrant*. For five years he covered the events in the Middle East, about which he wrote many reportages. In 2002 he won 'Het Gouden Pennetje' [The little golden pen], a journalistic prize for young talent, for his accounts about the Middle East. In 2006 after publishing his thought provoking book *Het zijn net mensen*, he was declared 'journalist of the year'. I have analyzed 28 reportages he wrote about the Middle East (mostly on Israel and Palestine) for *NRC Handelsblad* between 2002 and 2003.

Finally, I have also analysed a selection of the reportages Arnon Grunberg wrote for *NRC Handelsblad*. Grunberg (1971) is the odd one out in this list of foreign reporters, for he is first and foremost known as an esteemed and award-winning Dutch novelist. After contributing personal

<sup>86</sup> Prix Albert Londres, "Lauréat 2006," February 17, 2012, [Consultable at: [www.prixalbertlondres.com/Les-laureats/Les-laureats-du-prix-Albert-Londres-de-1999-a-2012/ArticleId/2420/Laureat-2006.aspx](http://www.prixalbertlondres.com/Les-laureats/Les-laureats-du-prix-Albert-Londres-de-1999-a-2012/ArticleId/2420/Laureat-2006.aspx)] (last consulted on June 9, 2013).

<sup>87</sup> Recently, Fisk has been accused of embellishing his stories and of factual inaccuracies in his accounts. In 2010 his former colleague Hugh Pope published his autobiography *Dining with Al-Qaeda*, in which he claims to have 'caught' Fisk as he coincidentally spoke to sources Fisk also consulted. These sources denied particular parts of the stories that Fisk has written. Fisk unequivocally denied these accusations by referring to his status as eyewitness, while pointing out that his critics were not there themselves. So far, no conclusive evidence of falsification has been provided.

<sup>88</sup> Roger Hardy, "In the killing fields," *The New Statesman*, October 24, 2005; Richard Beeston, "Great reporter, lousy prophet," *The Spectator*, October 22, 2005; Rachel Cooke, "Man of War," *The Observer*, April 13, 2008.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Williams, *Read All About It!*, 227-228; Peter Preston, "And then there were none," *InCirculation Magazine*, January/February, 2004, [www.inpublishing.co.uk/kb/articles/and\\_then\\_there\\_were\\_none.aspx](http://www.inpublishing.co.uk/kb/articles/and_then_there_were_none.aspx) (last consulted April 4, 2004).

travel columns to *NRC Handelsblad* for quite some time, he started contributing reportages in 2006 and has presented himself as journalist more pointedly since that moment.<sup>90</sup> He has become a daily columnist for *de Volkskrant* and contributes to *De Correspondent* on a regular basis. In spite of this he is generally not considered as a professional journalist in the sense of the other reporters and the veracity of his accounts has been challenged on several occasions.<sup>91</sup> Yet, exactly the fact that *NRC Handelsblad*, the daily with arguably the strongest quality profile in the Netherlands, on several occasions sent a famous novelist to the Middle East on his own or as an embedded reporter with the Dutch and American army on their peace enforcement missions is very interesting within the context of storytelling within journalism.<sup>92</sup>

Similar to the Nooteboom's reportages in *de Volkskrant* in the 1960s, Grunberg's collaboration with *NRC* can be explained as a smart commercial move to exploit Grunberg's appeal to a public that resembles the target audience of the newspaper.<sup>93</sup> Yet, in the case of Grunberg his highly self-reflective and ironic way of reporting also points to the influence the demonopolization of truth within postmodern society is having on journalism's professional framework. Compared to the other reporters in this case, who challenge certain characteristics of the objectivity regime, but ultimately do not entirely reject the premise that journalism can represent reality unambiguously, Grunberg's reportages take the rejection of the objectivity regime to its most radical conclusion - without seeking refuge in an 'anything goes' relativism. As I will argue this 'decentring' way of reporting is also part of the reason why some of his readers have trouble believing his stories. Thus, focusing on Grunberg's accounts further elucidates the relation between form, trust and truth. For this case study I have analysed the 43 reportages he wrote on Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon, which he compiled in book form together with his other reportages, published under the title *Kamermeisjes en soldaten* [Chambermaids and soldiers] in 2008.

## Between detached reporting and mediating subjectivity

In chapter IX I have argued that in the course of adopting the objectivity regime as a professional framework and in relation to the rise of television, reporters adopted different narrative features to represent an experience. This influenced the genre of the reportage considerably and led to two closely related reportage forms. On the one hand, the role of interviewing and quoting gained prominence and started to play a more important part within the reportage. Subsequently, the direct observation of the reporter became less important than it had been in the years before the Second World War. On the other hand, how observation was represented textually also became depersonalized in a way that resembled Direct Cinema; an overt eyewitness account was too strongly connected to the subjectivity of the reporter. As a result, the reportage drew closer to the background analysis, because the newsworthy information was often already provided by the television news, which was also believed to capture the atmosphere better because of the visual nature of the medium. In general, the characteristics of the reportage thus adopted the particular textual traits that the objectivity regime prescribed and formed the prelude to a period of high modernism in journalism.

Both strands can be discerned in the selection of contemporary reportages. In either case the reporter is present on-site and respectively interviews the people involved or convey a depersonalized

90 Vaessens, "Realiteitshonger," 307-309.

91 Harbers, "Featurized Journalism," 18-22.

92 In addition, he also wrote more light-hearted reportages for which he even went undercover once as a chambermaid in a large hotel in Germany for instance.

93 Harbers, "Featurized Journalism," 17.

account based on the reporter's observation of the event or situation. The reportages emphasizing the interviews show a close connection to the tradition of the French *visite*. In the *visite* the setting and atmosphere of the interview also gets quite some attention next to the actual interview.<sup>94</sup> Also, these accounts show quite some resemblance to the genre of the background analysis, in which the contextualization of an event is illustrated and cemented by presenting the divergent perspectives and explanations of varying sources on the matter in question. The resemblance to these other genres points to the diminishing distinction between them, suggesting a collapse of the opposition between fact and interpretation. In some cases this confused the difference between a background analysis that contains an anecdotal lead - with its typical focus on atmosphere and setting - and a reportage, which emphasis on atmosphere is characteristic for the genre.<sup>95</sup>

In the accounts focusing more on the - depersonalized - observations source consultation and quotes also play an important role, but they have a more subservient role. Like most reportages about the Parisian Revolt, the overt presence of the reporter is effaced and the story seems to unfurl automatically building on the direct cinema tradition that had become a dominant form of reporting with the growing dominance of the television.<sup>96</sup> Both types of reportage show a focus on storytelling techniques through which experiences and emotions are conveyed, but remain within the boundaries of the objectivity regime. In this sense they are opposed to those that do showcase the personal experiences and emotions of the reporter, which I will discuss after the more detailed analysis of narrative characteristics of the former.

### ***Telling a story through quotes***

At the heart of the first type of reportage lies a series of quotes interspersed with background information and analysis. This body of quotes is generally preceded by - and sometimes also closed off with - one or two paragraphs in which an on-the-spot situation or scene is described, corresponding with the increasing use of an anecdotal lead.<sup>97</sup> This way the on-site presence of the reporter is established, while at the same time the reader is drawn into the story by the tangible depiction of the setting and atmosphere of an event. Part of the appeal of this form seems to reside in the fact that this type of account is relatively inexpensive and time efficient compared to reportages relying on on-site observation for a longer period of time. Yet, it also enables the journalist to reify a complicated issue, such as the international relations within the Middle East, by approaching it from the bottom up. Instead of providing an abstract analysis of the consequences and reasons behind certain political decisions and foreign policies or consulting politicians, officials or experts about the issue, the reporter conveys an image of the situation by focusing on the experiences of ordinary people. Through the stories about the everyday life of the people in the street the reporter is able to render a personalized version of the larger history of a country, which can be considered a form of micro-history.<sup>98</sup> As my results and supporting prior research have shown this focus on ordinary people is considered a typical feature of popular journalism.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Kött, "Das Interview," 67-72, 155, 178-186; Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 440.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 440, 456, 511-512.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 439-440; Vos, "Van propagandist naar makelaar," 279-280; Dovey, *Freakshow*, 27.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Wijffjes, *Journalistiek in Nederland*, 338-339; Wahl Jorgenson, "Strategic ritual of emotionality," 137-141.

<sup>98</sup> This type of reporting shows some resemblance to forms of civic journalism in which journalists focus less on the top down coverage of institutional politics, but adopt the perspective of the individual citizens and attempt to (re)engage them with society, cf. Bardoel, "Het einde van de journalistiek," 365; Drok, "Civiele journalistiek," 378-383.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture*, 15-18; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 182-188.

Most reportages of Minoui and several of Luyendijk's accounts are good representatives of this type of reportage. In the following example Minoui for instance starts her account on the position of the Jewish community in Iran by setting the stage:

**Neither porter nor a copper sign. To find the association of young Jews of Teheran, you have to get lost in the labyrinth of small streets that surround the large Revolution Avenue. At the first sound of the doorbell, a large brown man sticks his head around the metal door that stands ajar and checks the identity of his visitor before inviting him to follow him into a beautiful classic villa.<sup>100</sup>**

After such an evocative intro her reportages generally draw heavily on the quotes of different sources, commenting on a certain issue - in this case the increasingly threatened position of Jews in Iran under Ahmadinejad - and relating it to their personal lives. Apart from the start such reportages invest less effort in constructing a story that provides the readers with vicarious experience, but rather focus on providing an overview of the perspectives and experiences of different people with regard to a certain issue. In this sense the account is a typical representative of journalism within the objectivity regime as it juxtaposes opposing or varying views on reality.<sup>101</sup> Only occasionally, short interspersions about the facial expressions of the people being interviewed or concerning the environment convey the atmosphere and remind the reader of the on-site presence of the reporter. For instance, when Minoui interviews a Yemeni girl who got inspired by Nujood's bold resistance to her forced marriage:

**"When I heard Nujood talk on television, one morning I fled", mutters Arwa Abdul Mohammad Ali. This small brunette with her angelic looks has come a long way.<sup>102</sup>**

Together with the introductory paragraphs, they remind the reader of the underlying communicative situation, in which the information is gathered by a reporter who was there at a specific time and place.<sup>103</sup>

In general, though, the attention for the atmosphere and experience are somewhat subservient to the analytic focus of such accounts - in some cases blurring its divergence from a news analysis. Take for instance the way Luyendijk first renders his analysis of the strained relations conflict between Israel and Palestine and subsequently illustrates it by conveying the experiences and views of the citizens involved.

**Talk to the broken people in Ramallah and it is no longer about the pros and cons of suicide attacks, about the position of Arafat or the competition between Hamas and Arafat's authorities. Sabr and Sumud are now the keywords, patience and perseverance. Not that any Palestinian can be found who thinks the intifadah should stop. For eight years Israel and the now deeply mistrusted Arafat have played hide and seek around the negotiating table, according to the Palestinians. Now is the time for an independent state in the occupied areas until that time the revolt proceeds. If Israel refuses to negotiate as long as the reign of terror goes on, the Palestinians in turn refuse to negotiate as long as the occupation continues.<sup>104</sup>**

<sup>100</sup> Delphine Minoui, "La peur de la communauté juive d'Iran," *Le Figaro*, March 29, 2006.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Tuchman, "Strategic Ritual," 665-666.

<sup>102</sup> Minoui, D. (2009). 'Au Yémen, la révolte des petites filles mariées de force'. In: *Le Figaro*. 24 February 2009; [www.lefigaro.fr/international/2009/02/24/01003-20090224ARTFIG00311-au-yemen-la-revolte-des-petites-filles-mariees-de-force-.php](http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2009/02/24/01003-20090224ARTFIG00311-au-yemen-la-revolte-des-petites-filles-mariees-de-force-.php)

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Kött, *Das Interview*, 137-138.

<sup>104</sup> Joris Luyendijk, "Vuil smeult in bezet Ramallah," *NRC Handelsblad*, July 3, 2002.

Luyendijk points to the vicious circle the conflict between Palestine and Israel is in, which is then grounded in everyday reality by quoting sources that illustrate and confirm this analysis.

But the bitterness is general. 'When Israel invades us the last time, there were protests in Europe and America and the Arab world', say a newspaper vendor. 'But it is quiet now. It is just us again.' The name Bush only elicits scornful snickering.

[...]

'Maybe it is better this way', reflects architect Ya'quob. [...] 'Now the Israelis have occupied us directly again, instead of with Arafat in between, everything is much clearer, contends Ya'qoub. 'Ultimately the Israelis will have to give us a state. I mean, we are not leaving. What do they want to do? Colonize us until the end of days?'<sup>105</sup>

The fact that in these reportages the abstract analytic level is firmly rooted in the underlying everyday-life experiences of ordinary people points to its growing authority as a source of knowledge to understand and represent reality truthfully. Nevertheless, as the reporters refrain from drawing on their own experiences such reportages keep abiding to the textual conventions of the objectivity regime.

### ***The fly on the wall***

The best examples of the reportages displaying depersonalized observation are the accounts of the French reporter Adrien Jaulmes. His reporting comprises the careful and meticulous observation of the events and the people involved, which he quotes as well, without ever overtly taking up a part in the accounts. The accounts generally start in media res with only a few remarks situating the story. As a result the story directly pulls the reader in. Take for example the way Jaulmes starts his account describing a reconnaissance trip with a small group of American soldiers.

"SNIPER!" An isolated shooter has just opened fire on a patrol of a unit of the 10th mountain division, on a country road south of Youssoufiyah, an agricultural region that gives the Sunni country south-west of Baghdad a bad reputation. From the blinded Humvee that is parked on the side of a path, the soldiers return fire in the direction the shots came from, with more intensity than precision. The flares flash passed like in a video game towards a half-collapsed embankment and roused a couple of wading birds.<sup>106</sup>

Contrary to the reportages discussed before, such scenes are not limited to the first and last paragraphs, but they take up most of the reportage. For that reason Jaulmes' accounts are less analytic than the reportages by Minoui or Luyendijk. On only a few occasions does Jaulmes switch to an analytic stance to situate the events he describes within their foreign political context. Moreover, in these instances the analytic parts serve the purpose of the observations instead of the other way around.

Jaulmes often picks one or two people on which he focuses and it is as if he is looking over their shoulder during the events. Subsequently these people become the main characters around which the story revolves and their behavior and experiences are presented as being representative for the general situation. As a result of this focus, Jaulmes' vivid descriptions, which often build tension to

<sup>105</sup> Luyendijk, "Vuil smeult in bezet Ramallah."

<sup>106</sup> Adrien Jaulmes, "La guerre sans illusions des GI en Irak," *Le Figaro*, March 7, 2007.

captivate his readers, are generally full of quotes. Moreover, he often renders entire dialogues between the people involved. At first glance, it is as if the story unfolds automatically and Jaulmes thus lets the facts speak for themselves.

Obviously, such an appearance of objectivity is inherently flawed. Moreover, in an implicit, but seemingly deliberate way Jaulmes directs the interpretation of his readership. Take for example, Lieutenant Ives, who is part of a division of the American army that is attempting to improve the situation in Iraq by looking for terrorists. Jaulmes gives a detailed description of the lieutenant, building his personality and conveying his underlying aims. Lieutenant Ives for instance makes an effort by speaking Arabic to win the trust of the Iraqi people.

Lieutenant Ives knocks on the metal portal. A young, sturdy woman opens the door leaf. [...] "Good Day, we would like to talk to your husband", says Lieutenant Ives in rudimentary Arabic. "There is nobody here. Everybody is at work", she answers. The lieutenant has a hard time understanding the answer. [...] "Who are those men?" asks Ives in Arabic. The lieutenant seizes every occasion there is to practice his basic language skills. He wants to convince the inhabitants of Karma that the Americans aren't there to occupy them.<sup>107</sup>

Later on in the reportage Jaulmes returns on what initially seemed a minor detail. By showing how quickly Lieutenant Ives abandons his attempt to speak the Iraqi's native tongue for his own when his friendly approach is not working, he subtly suggests that such 'courtesy' is only a superficial posture instead of a sincere approach towards the Iraqi people.

A man of barely thirty years old in a light purple overall opens the door with a forced smile. He accompanies the marines that muster a group of people from the neighborhood on a fallow area behind the house. Black-veiled women are looking at the spectacle from afar. "Who is shooting at the Americans?" asks the lieutenant. "They are not people from here," tries a mustached man to explain. "Listen! I am getting fed up with this!" the officer interrupts, who suddenly does not try anymore to speak Arabic. The interpreter is very quickly translating the words of Lieutenant Ives, who is menacingly pointing his finger at the small group of Iraqis.<sup>108</sup>

By describing similar observations in which the idealistic image of the civilized and patient US soldiers bringing democracy to Iraq while making a genuine effort to overcome the cultural differences clashes with reality, Jaulmes criticizes the American army implicitly. Within this interpretative framework he sets up, the Green Zone in Bagdad marks the ultimate failure of the American mission in Iraq. This heavily protected safe haven for the American army and other western officials in the middle of the nation's capital symbolizes the unbridgeable gap between the two cultures, shutting the door for any progress in the country. Jaulmes charges his descriptions of the Green Zone with his cultural critique in several implicit ways. First of all he dubs the Green Zone 'Amérak', a contraction of the French *Amérique* and *Irak*. With this name he emphasizes the alienation and cultural difference of the Green Zone from the 'real' Iraqi country and culture. Moreover, the images he uses to describe this Amérak also suggest such a disconnection.

<sup>107</sup> Adrien Jaulmes, "Irak: les marines contre un ennemi invisible," *Le Figaro*, December 5, 2005.

<sup>108</sup> Jaulmes, "Irak: les marines contre un ennemi invisible."



After having disembarked the “rhino” [an armored military vehicle, FH], it is very easy to forget the devastated Iraq that surrounds *Amérak* like a fierce sea that breaks on the shores of an enchanted island. Well sheltered behind the high walls of the fence off, the mighty American logistics have transformed the former restricted district of the leaders of the Ba’ath regime into Xanadu on the banks of the Tigris. The majority of the inhabitants have never set foot on the actual Iraq: the red zone.<sup>109</sup>

The ironic comparison of the Green Zone with an enchanted island shows its isolation from everyday life in the other parts of Iraq, which are thoroughly devastated by the war. Jaulmes thereby emphasizes that the people living in either place are part of different realities that are entirely foreign to each other. The paradisiacal image of the Green Zone that the metaphor evokes, is undercut by the negative cultural-historical connotations of this image that points to its darker side. Shakespeare’s famous play *The Tempest* for example is set on an enchanted island, which is ruled by the tyrannical sorcerer Prospero, who has enslaved the primitive creature Caliban.<sup>110</sup> The allusion to such stories incorporates a post-colonial critique in Jaulmes account, which is further reinforced when later on in the excerpt the Green Zone is called ‘Xanadu’.<sup>111</sup> Xanadu is also a trope in cultural history and points to imperialism and to profusion leading to decadence. It refers to the name of the luxurious mansion of the fictional embodiment of capitalistic culture Charles Foster Kane, whose initial idealism and compassion for the people in need disappears as his attempt to fulfill the ‘American dream’ corrupts and ultimately ruins him. In this movie Kane, a fictional representation of the American newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst, is called ‘American’s Kublai Khan, referring to the Mongolian imperialistic sovereign Kublai Khan, whose ‘summer capital’ in China was named Xanadu. Khan has become a symbol for imperialism and profusion and is referenced in Coleridge’s poem ‘Kubla Khan’ and in several novels, movies and songs.<sup>112</sup> This reference draws a cynic parallel with *Amérak* as America’s summer capital and Jaulmes’ employs the name to point to the arrogant and presumptuous imperialistic inclination of the United States and the decadence of its capitalistic culture the army is trying to export. These intertextual references thus reinforce Jaulmes’ portrayal of the peace enforcement mission of the American army as a form of modern imperialism doomed to fail.<sup>113</sup>

The following quote particularly reinforces the criticism on the capitalistic culture as a more up-close description of the Green Zone clearly unmasks any paradisiacal overtones the metaphors might have evoked. The ‘enchanted island’ or “eden” as it is called in this quote proves to be a miniature of the American ‘McCulture’, in which Iraqi culture is reduced to a few tourist shops - a way of portraying this situation that shows great similarities to the way Grunberg portrays the American army in his reportages.

Inside the fence off, *Amérak* is on American time. [...] in the mess hall, with air conditioning installed by Kellog, Brown and Root, an affiliation of the Texan enterprise Halliburton, American dishes, like fried chicken, hamburgers, Caesar salad and pancakes are served in large portions. A mall is built in the center of the green zone. A PX [an exchange service run by the US military,

<sup>109</sup> Adrien Jaulmes, “Voyage en “Amérak”, la zone verte de Bagdad,” *Le Figaro*, February 26, 2007.

<sup>110</sup> Another example can be found in Homer’s *Odyssey*, in which Odysseus and his crew also reach an enchanted island that is ruled by the sorceress Circe, who enslaves everybody that visits the island by magically turning them into animals.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations. The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 142-160.

<sup>112</sup> Next to *Citizen Kane*, Kublai Khan is for instance referenced in the song ‘Welcome to the pleasuredome’ by Franky goes to Hollywood, in Italo Calvino’s novel *Invisible Cities* and the 1980 romantic film *Xanadu* starring Olivia Newton John.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Nigel Leask, “Kubla Khan and orientalism: the road to Xanadu revisited,” *Romanticism* 4, no.1 (1998): 1-21.

FH] sells military gadgets, dishes from the tex-mex kitchen and hot dogs, or printed mugs saying “Operation Iraqi Freedom”. In the small boutiques you can buy tapestry or one can get a hair-cut from one of the privileged Iraqis that have acquired permission to set foot in this Eden.<sup>114</sup>

Especially within a European context the connection of the elevated idea of paradise to the image of American fast food culture, shorthand for the superficiality of Western consumer society, is highly ironic and subsequently exposes what Jaulmes believes to be the true nature and underlying intentions of the mission of the American army.

As an exception Jaulmes also formulates his critique explicitly in one of his reportages. This does not mean however that he suddenly appears on the foreground of his account. His critique complies with the requirements of the objectivity regime and remains depersonalized and detached.

**But behind these folkloristic characteristics, four years after the fall of Saddam Hussain the green zone remains to before anything else the most striking symbol of the tragic incomprehension between the Iraqi population and an army that regards itself as liberators, which was established from the moment the American troops arrived in Baghdad. And of the American inability to consider the delicate political issues from a perspective other than logistical.<sup>115</sup>**

In the extract above Jaulmes overtly condemns the ignorance and arrogance of the approach of the American army he has been witnessing in Iraq. By making his critique explicit he creates a solid point of reference and a clear frame of judgment to which his implicit commentary that his descriptions contain can be related. In spite of their many thematic resemblances, it is, as I will show further on, the stability of his perspective on the American intervention in Iraq that makes his reportages so different from the way Grunberg's accounts.

Like Minoui and Luyendijk, Jaulmes also adopts a more bottom-up approach by focusing on the experiences and feelings of the soldiers and to a lesser extent those of the Iraqi people instead of on the views and analyses of military or government officials. Moreover, Jaulmes subtly interweaves his opinion with the story by the use of telling imagery and intertextual references. In that sense he stretches the norms of the objectivity regime. Nevertheless, Jaulmes abides to the formal conventions of the objectivity regime that signal his detachment. In that sense he still subscribes to the separation of factual reporting and opinionated commentary, although his implicit commentary and use of imagery certainly strains the tenability of this opposition.

## The mediating subjectivity resurfaces

In opposition to the previous reportages abiding the norm of detachment and - overt - impartiality there are the accounts in which the reporters reclaim their authority as an eyewitness. They make themselves part of the story again after the dominance of the objectivity regime had more or less brought an end to that. These accounts are typified by the highly personal approach of the reporters, in which observation is fused to personal - sometimes almost private - experiences, feelings, and reflections.

What is interesting is that this type of mediating subjectivity is virtually absent in the journalistic work of Minoui and Jaulmes (and the ‘quick scan’ of the accounts of the other French reporters that

<sup>114</sup> Jaulmes, “Voyage en “Amérak”, la zone verte de Bagdad.”

<sup>115</sup> Jaulmes, “Voyage en “Amérak”, la zone verte de Bagdad.”

were considered for the analysis also confirmed this). Although this is somewhat surprising given the long tradition of *grand reporters* that made themselves part of their stories, there is reason to believe that this might be typical for the contemporary French reportage. The previous case study concerning the reportage in the 1960s showed that journalism in France also adopted the objectivity regime - be it in a less strict sense than in the United States. The reportage remained an important genre, but was stripped of its subjective elements. That the recent reappearance of these subjective and personalized forms might have affected French journalism less can be explained in two mutually reinforcing ways. First, as the popular press plays a much weaker role in the French media landscape there is less pressure on the quality press to adopt a popular style, in which experience and emotions play a central role. Second and more importantly, research has shown that the acceptance of the traditional societal framework with its trust in legitimized institutions like politics, science and journalism has eroded less.<sup>116</sup> From that perspective, the legitimized cultural modes of knowledge production might be more stable. As a result the definition of what quality journalism entails, might be less contested. Thus, in spite of the prominence of philosophical and literary postmodernist ideas within intellectual circles France, the postmodern nature of its society in the sense of Beck and Giddens might be less strong. Obviously, this cannot be more than a somewhat crude and rather tentative hypothesis, which needs much more empiric substantiation.

This is not to say that there cannot be found examples of a more personal approach in France, nor that such forms are ubiquitous in the Netherlands and Great Britain. It does however seem to manifest stronger in the latter two countries. Reporters, like Luyendijk, Fisk and Grunberg present an alternative way of conveying the world. The fact that Luyendijk, and to a lesser extent Fisk, also published articles that adhere to the formal conventions of objectivity supports my claim that journalism within postmodern society can entail both forms and that journalists in their struggle to find the best way to deal with the changing journalistic context are experimenting with new forms next to using more established ones. In that sense their reportages can often be situated in a continuum that extends from ethnographic realism to cultural phenomenology, allowing for intermediate forms borrowing elements from both traditions. Fisk for instance fits in very well with ethnographic realism as he presents his accounts as conveying reality "how it really is", whereas Grunberg's ironic and ambiguous accounts are an almost perfect fit with the decentring principles of cultural phenomenology that problematize journalism's positivistic assumptions about the representation of reality.<sup>117</sup> In turn, Luyendijk's reportages show how these perspectives on the representation of reality can alternate or blend together.

The latter two explore the ambiguity of journalism's meaning-making process and draw attention to the subjective nature of reporting. As a result they challenge mainstream journalism's cultural authority. Luyendijk shows the way different cultural perspectives and ideologies clash with each other, but seldom problematizes his own way of representing reality, which Grunberg constantly does. He exposes the lack of consensus in the way individuals (including himself) interpret social reality. Moreover, he explores the inherent subjectivity and partiality of his reporting in relation to journalism's truth claim. He criticizes for instance journalism's binary distinction between reality and fiction by consequently showing that both domains are intricately intertwined. To be able to do justice to the complexity and intricacy of his framework of imagery and convey this in a clear manner, I have discussed Grunberg's accounts in a separate section.

<sup>116</sup> Susanne Janssen, *Het soortelijke gewicht van kunst in een open samenleving: de classificatie van cultuuruitingen in Nederland en andere westerse landen na 1950* (Rotterdam, [n.p.], 2005), 19-30.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Eason, "Image-world," 52-62.

### ***A human angle and personal approach***

The bottom-up focus on the experiences of ordinary people was clear in the other reportages. This focus on the personal perspective of the everyday citizen is also present in the more personalized reportages. Fisk for instance devotes one of his reportages to the life story of an Iraqi city guide, Saleh, who tours him on his boat through the city center of Baghdad. Fisk presents the life experiences of Saleh as a reified version of the general history of Iraq.

Saleh spends his days ferrying passengers across the Tigris for a few dinars - it saves the long walk over the bridges or the oven-like search for taxis in the Baghdad streets - and yesterday was a special day because he was asked by *The Independent* to take his boat right through the city.

All he had to do to make a good fare was to tell the story of his life.

"Our journey will cost you but my own dialogue is free," he said. It was a good deal. Saleh is only 35, but his tale of war and military desertion and fear was *a little history of Iraq* [my italics, FH].<sup>118</sup>

Contrary to the detached reportages, Fisk, Luyendijk - and Grunberg as well for that matter - not only use the personal stories of the citizens, but lend their senses to their readers, showing the impression the world 'out there' interacts with the internal world of the reporter. Instead of giving a straight-forward description, Fisk conveys his impression of Beirut by using a metaphor of the phoenix - a mythical bird that periodically regenerates from its own ashes.

I walked through the deserted city centre of Beirut yesterday and it reminded me more than ever of a film lot, a place of dreams too beautiful to last, a phoenix from the ashes of civil war whose plumage was so brightly coloured that it blinded its own people.<sup>119</sup>

Moreover, the reporters also convey their own personal and everyday experiences in their accounts. By integrating such illustrative anecdotes from their own lives, the boundary between public and private experience and information becomes blurred. Luyendijk for instance recounts the way he tried to help his next-door Palestinian neighbor who is covertly harassed over the telephone by colonizing Jews trying to coerce her into selling her house.<sup>120</sup>

Last year's summer our neighbor, a paranoid Catholic Palestinian spinster, started to receive mysterious phone calls. Around three or four 'o clock at night the telephone rang, and when she answered the phone they hung up after a few seconds of silence. That went on for three days and at that time our neighbor was exhausted. Why didn't she go to the police, I asked, but she evaded that question.<sup>121</sup>

He sympathizes with his neighbor and volunteers to answer her phone to try and scare off the people on the other side. Thus, in their accounts Luyendijk and Fisk do not make a fundamental distinction between the experiences of the citizens of the respective Middle Eastern country and their own. They present their own experiences as a frame of reference to interpret reality and to elucidate the chaotic everyday-life experiences in the Middle East to their readership. Especially Fisk turns his own experiences into the measure of things. In the following quote for example he argues explicitly

<sup>118</sup> Robert Fisk, "Tales from the Tigris Riverbank," *The Independent*, July 8, 2004.

<sup>119</sup> Robert Fisk, "Paradise Lost," *The Independent*, July 19, 2004.

<sup>120</sup> Joris Luyendijk, "Banger voor politie dan voor de dief," *NRC Handelsblad*, January 7, 2003.

<sup>121</sup> Luyendijk, "Banger voor politie dan voor de dief."

that his experiences are representative for a large part of the citizens in Baghdad:

For many Baghdadis, the day began as it did for me, instinctively ducking as a tremendous explosion clattered over the city. I was trying to make a phone call on my new and inefficient mobile phone when the first rocket exploded on the police station near Andalos Square. I heard the firing of the weapon, a dull thump, and then the swish of the missile overhead.<sup>122</sup>

Although Luyendijk also often points to the different position he has as a journalist, he also uses his own experience and state of mind to convey the general experience and emotional impact of a bombing in Gaza City he witnessed.

If you are in a town that is being bombed, you experience many feelings, but most of all powerlessness. Suddenly your life is in the hands of somebody unknown, somebody behind a switch panel or in a cockpit. [...] I felt a fear so nauseating that I covered it immediately with another emotion. The Palestinians around me did the same, and this way we all performed a small play: Oh, another explosion. Hahaha. Doesn't affect us. Nonsense of course. You cannot suppress mortal fear without repercussions.<sup>123</sup>

This personalization is reinforced by the often informal and sometimes even vivacious writing style, which suggests a certain familiarity between the reporter and his audience. Especially Fisk often employs such a strategy and also occasionally addresses his readers directly by adding short interjections in a sentence giving it a conversational touch. This way he creates a feeling of connection between the readers and the author in their perspective on a certain matter, which particularly Martin Conboy has mentioned as being typical for the language use of the popular press.<sup>124</sup> A good example of this can be found in the following quote. It shows Fisk describing an event, but through his interjections - which I have made bold - simultaneously commenting directly on the proceedings to his readers as well.

The soldier nearest my door seemed as mystified as I was, a friendly, intelligent young man called Matt Meyers who had been in Iraq for a year, loved soldiering, was prepared to stay longer and planned to vote - *hold your breath* - for George Bush in November.

[...]

I offered to give Meyers a copy of my book on the Lebanon war and he gave me his address in Germany so I could send it to him when he goes home - *very reluctantly, no doubt* - in May.<sup>125</sup>

It is as if Fisk is directly talking to his readership and the interjections like "Come again?" are used rhetorically to emphasize the information he is providing. In the example above these interjections also point to the opinionated stance Fisk takes in his reportages, which I will discuss in the following section.

<sup>122</sup> Robert Fisk, "Iraq constitution sealed at last, and immediately come the warnings of an upsurge in violence," *The Independent*, March 9, 2004.

<sup>123</sup> Joris Luyendijk, "'je voelt van alles, bovenal machteloosheid,'" *NRC Handelsblad*, March 25, 2003.

<sup>124</sup> Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Britain: Constructing a community through language* (London/New York: Routledge, 2006), 11-12, 14-45; Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture*, 15-18.

<sup>125</sup> Robert Fisk, "The day the 1st armoured division, with guns at the ready, came to check on our man in Baghdad," *The Independent*, March 24, 2004.

In spite of all the personal elements in the accounts, the reporters generally remain a first person minor, acting as an observer. Yet, in one of Fisk's reportages he takes the personal approach to the next level, becoming a first person major around whom the story revolves. One of his accounts, for example, describes how American soldiers under the supervision of one Colonel Scheetz barge in his hotel to question personnel and search for explosives. Fisk is the lead character, pointing out the foolishness of the search to the soldiers and mediating between them and the hotel staff. When the soldiers subsequently sent him a small gift, he reflects on the awkward position they put him in:

I have a firm policy. Don't appear - ever - to be fraternizing with the occupying power. It's more than my life is worth. That's when the waiter arrived with a tray covered in a white cloth and - standing upon it - a can of Amstel beer. "It's compliments of Mr. Scheetz," he said. O Lordy, Lordy. The Iraqis looked on in silence. The waiter looked at me sheepishly and shrugged his shoulders. What was this for, the Iraqis were asking themselves? So was I. Mohamed, the receptionist who had been told not to "play games", was watching me like the proverbial hawk. I told the waiter to take the beer back and he did (Fisk, 2004b).<sup>126</sup>

In another account the leading character 'Detective Inspector Fisk' sets out to find the real author of a biography of Saddam Hussein that was falsely published under his name.

And it was clearly the moment for Detective Inspector Fisk to hunt down "The Mystery of the Cairo Forger". Elementary, my dear reader, which is why I boarded Middle East Airlines flight ME304 from Beirut to my least favourite Arab capital, the bureaucratic, traffic-snarled, bankrupt, wonderful, lawless, irredeemable, spectacular Cairo.

Even the newsworthiness of this account is directly connected to Fisk as an individual. In this classic 'whodunit', explicitly referring to Sherlock Holmes, he puts all the stops out and - with a good sense of overstatement and drama - takes his reader along on a humorously and compellingly conveyed quest. Clearly, the fading difference between public and private, between detached and engaged in the work of these reporters goes beyond that of the previously discussed reportages.<sup>127</sup> Moreover, this is also a good example of an account in which the boundary between information and entertainment, considered a typical characteristic of popular journalism, is effaced.<sup>128</sup>

### ***Opinion and reflection***

Both Luyendijk and Fisk thus ground the truth claim of their reportages in their status as eyewitness that actually lives in the region. They also seem to derive their authority to openly judge the events they experience from this status as well, which reinforces their contestation and effacement of the boundaries between factual reporting and opinionated commentary. Particularly Fisk often explicitly presents his unvarnished opinion about the situation in the Middle East as the 'true' or 'right' version of reality.

<sup>126</sup> Fisk, "The day the 1st armoured division, with guns at the ready, came to check on our man in Baghdad."

<sup>127</sup> The difference between these type of reportages shows some resemblance to the distinction between civic and citizen journalism. The former aims to incorporate the perspective of the ordinary man in the street into his account by consulting such sources and thus paying attention to their perspective. Within citizen journalism the account is written by such an ordinary man in the street. In a sense Luyendijk en Fisk adopt the latter perspective. By drawing on their personal experiences they fuse their status as journalists and ordinary inhabitants, cf. Gillmor, *We the Media*, 136-142.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Bird, "Storytelling on the Far Side," 385; Brants, "Who is afraid of infotainment," 327.

Fisk's overt judgment is sometimes immediately apparent in the headline of his articles. A straightforward header like 'What I am watching in Lebanon each day is an outrage' leaves no doubt about his opinion.<sup>129</sup> In his reportage, Fisk uses his observations to cement the characterization and judgment of the situation that ensue. In most of his articles on the American and British military interference in Iraq, he openly condemns the US and Britain for their military role.

There is a wail of grief from the yard behind us where 50 people are waiting in the shade of the Baghdad mortuary wall. There are wooden coffins in the street, stacked against the wall, lying on the pavement. Old men - fathers and uncles - are padding them with grease-proof paper. When the bodies are released, they will be taken to the mosque in coffins and then buried in shrouds. [...] The statistics of violent death in Baghdad are now beyond shame. [...] A total of 506 violent deaths in under three weeks in Baghdad alone. Even the Iraqi officials here shake their heads in disbelief. "New Iraq" under its new American-appointed Prime Minister is more violent than ever.<sup>130</sup>

Fisk relates the everyday tragedies that he depicts to what he considers to be the failing mission of the American and British armies. He holds Western politicians responsible for the situation in the Middle East. By using obvious sarcasm, they are depicted as hypocrites whose statistics and jargon has lost their connection with the tragedy on the level of the everyday human experience.

Trucks are arriving in the street beside us, a pick-up and a small lorry with corpses for autopsy. Tony Blair says it is safer here. He is wrong. Every month is a massacre in Baghdad. Thieves, rapists, looters, American troops at checkpoints and on convoys, revenge killers, insurgents, they are shooting down the people of this city faster than ever. [...] So the war is getting worse. The casualties are growing by the week. And Mr. Blair thinks Iraq is safer.<sup>131</sup>

What Fisk ultimately claims is that his bottom-up on-site eyewitness reporting results in a more accurate perspective on reality than the top-down perspective the distant authorities have and consequently convey to their voters.

European politicians have talked about Israel's "disproportionate" response to Wednesday's capture of its soldiers. They are wrong. What I am now watching in Lebanon each day is an outrage. How can there be any excuse - any - for the 73 dead Lebanese civilians blown apart these past three days? The same applies, of course, to the four Israeli civilians killed by Hizbollah rockets.<sup>132</sup>

All the accounts encapsulating his depictions and critique are presented in authoritative language that leaves no space for ambiguity. Truth and trust in this journalism practice are strongly rooted in the personal experience and emotions of the reporter without really problematizing the subjectivity of the reporter's perceptions and judgment. This common sense approach to reality and truth shows similarities to the complaint about the one-sided and reductive nature of the representation of reality within popular journalism.<sup>133</sup> Such a narrative strategy fits in with the tradition of ethnographic realism. Compared to the way Eason illustrated this journalism practice in the work of Tom Wolfe,

<sup>129</sup> Robert Fisk, "What I am watching in Lebanon each day is an outrage," *The Independent*, July 15, 2006.

<sup>130</sup> Robert Fisk, "Baghdad is a city that reeks with the stench of the dead," *The Independent*, July 28, 2004.

<sup>131</sup> Fisk, "Baghdad is a city that reeks with the stench of the dead."

<sup>132</sup> Fisk, "What I am Watching in Lebanon Each Day is an Outrage."

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Greenberg, "Personal experience turned outward," 153-154; Bird, "Storytelling on the Far Side," 381-384.

Fisk's lack of doubt about truth status of his own accounts seems to ignore any acknowledgment of a certain cultural relativism. The certainty with which he presents his accounts can be seen as a non-reflective answer to the doubt about the objectivity regime.

At times Luyendijk makes similar claims with regard to the value of an on-site perspective. For instance, in a particular reportage he reflects on the concept of a 'clean war' and criticizes the abstract perspective of the government officials on the Middle East conflict.

I have been bombed myself once, and I am often reminded of it these days. It was in Gaza-city and with regard to scale and duration much, much less intense than what the people in Bagdad, Mosul, Basra and Tikrit are enduring for six days now. But I do think that there are parallels and those mostly concern the category of victims that does not make it into the statistics. We are now hearing about civilian casualties and injured people. If that body count doesn't go up to much it is considered to have been a 'clean' war. I think that only people without any war experience can [say] such a thing.<sup>134</sup>

In the remainder of the account he tries to show the shortcomings of such a representation of reality that omits the human angle almost entirely. Yet, contrary to Fisk, Luyendijk's rhetoric is less authoritative and allows for a more nuanced depiction of reality. He devotes a large part of his attention to conveying the partiality of the perspectives on the conflict in the Middle East and implies that his presence 'on the ground' offers a necessary addition to the dominant picture that is constantly reiterated in the media.

Show how American snipers have guns and binoculars of such quality that they can kill Iraqi soldiers without the Iraqis ever knowing that there was an American in the neighborhood. And don't forget to mention that Iraqi conscripts are some kind of doomed slaves; if they try to surrender they are shot immediately on site by their commander. But if they don't surrender they get a daisy cutter [a type of bomb, FH] on their heads. That is in any case what I have learned from the bombings in Gaza. The term 'clean war' belongs to the list pregnant virgin, democratic dictator and praise of folly.<sup>135</sup>

Luyendijk's emphasis on the bottom-up perspective as a valuable addition shows his awareness of the difficulties that haunt the journalistic representation of reality. In many of his accounts he therefore offers an adjustment of the stereotypical images of the Middle East. However, in this adjustment he still subscribes to the basic assumption that journalism has the right epistemological tools to represent reality in a truthful manner. In these accounts he ultimately asserts - be it that this claim is much more modest than Fisk's - that his representation is truthful. His reportages thus consist of elements that are reminiscent of cultural phenomenology, but in their ultimate truth claim still come closest to ethnographic realism.

Only in a few cases Luyendijk shapes his accounts in a way that he carefully teases out the cultural values underlying opposing perspectives and juxtaposing them without determining what is the right one. A good example can be found in Luyendijk's account about the way Arab men deal with female sexuality. Based on his own experiences and observations he dissects the Western perspective on this issue and shows the stereotypical simplicity of it. Luyendijk starts out ironically

**134** Luyendijk, "“je voelt van alles, bovenal machteloosheid.”"

**135** Luyendijk, "“je voelt van alles, bovenal machteloosheid.”"



by saying that all of the sudden he understood the attitude of the Arab men, which boils down to the argument that women who dress provocatively bring any degrading remarks or even uninvited groping up on themselves.

'Don't stare', my smiling host says at the Jeddah Private Beach Club. 'Here, take my sunglasses.'  
I look up feeling busted and direct my gaze demonstrative on the bare pier of this only mixed beach club of all of Saudi-Arabia. Then, willy-nilly, I suddenly sympathize with my Arab fellow man. How did that happen?<sup>136</sup>

Throughout the reportage Luyendijk counters the Western stereotypical explanation that these men get overly excited by seeing partial nudity, because most women in Arab countries cover themselves up. Conversely, based on his own experiences, Luyendijk claims that in such an environment without any erotic stimuli the sexual arousal withers. Nevertheless, he ends his account with a hyperbole that shows that the Arab perspective is also flawed:

And when one passed by on high heels and only covered up minimally, I could only disapprovingly think by myself: well, she is asking for it. The whore.<sup>137</sup>

Luyendijk does not resolve this paradox and suggests that is impossible to do so without taking position. Implicitly this points to the inherent partiality of every perspective on reality and to journalism's problematic truth claim. Particularly in these occasions, which echo the principles of the tradition of cultural phenomenology, he anticipated one of the main points of his press critique a few years later.

## A novelist as reporter

Whereas Luyendijk alternates between ethnographic realism and cultural phenomenology, Grunberg's reportages clearly fit in with the latter tradition as they express a fundamental doubt about journalism's ability to represent reality in a truthful manner. His reportages are characterized by ironic ambiguity that undermines the stability and tenability of every depiction of or perspective on reality. Apart from his status as a literary writer, this epistemological doubt might be the reason why Grunberg's accounts are treated with some suspicion towards their veracity. *NRC Handelsblad* for instance explicitly classified Grunberg's pieces as columns - a genre in which the author is permitted the most freedom. This is striking, because the articles are generally - also by Grunberg himself - characterized as reportages. By explicitly calling Grunberg's pieces columns, *NRC* seems to express its anxiety toward the nature of Grunberg's journalism and the reception by the audience. Such expectations could also explain the placement of these pieces in the cultural supplement, which is not a common spot for reportages dealing with foreign politics. Grunberg himself showed some aggravation with this choice of the newspaper.

<sup>136</sup> Joris Luyendijk, "Help! Vrouwen in bikini!", *NRC Handelsblad*, July 6, 2002.

<sup>137</sup> Luyendijk, "Help! Vrouwen in bikini!"

In addition to that, my articles were published in the Cultural Supplement of the NRC, or in the art section. That is fine with me. But it is also a conscious choice of the newspaper to disarm the stories a little beforehand. It's as if they are trying to suggest that the articles in the foreign affairs section, mostly written by reporters located in Rotterdam, are closer to reality.<sup>138</sup>

Although he does acknowledge that his approach to reality differs from the more 'mainstream' journalism, Grunberg objects to the suggestion that his journalistic work would be a less truthful depiction of the world. On the contrary, he defends his way of reporting and suggests that "this highly subjective way of 'newsgathering' amounts to something that might come closer to 'truth' or 'reality' in this case, than mainstream journalism."<sup>139</sup> Like, Luyendijk and other press critics, Grunberg thus contests the affordances of the objectivity regime.

### **Highlighting subjectivity**

Like Fisk and Luyendijk, the reader sees the world through the eyes of the reporter and traces his steps. More importantly, Grunberg's reportages showcase an unrelenting reflection on the process of reporting and on his own position as a novelist-reporter both on an implicit as explicit level. Although Luyendijk's accounts are also reflective this technique has a less unsettling effect than in Grunberg's stories. In his first reportage about his stay with the Dutch soldiers in Afghanistan Grunberg sets the stage by immediately questioning his position as a reporter:

I made this journey as an 'embedded journalist'. What 'embedded' meant exactly remained to be seen, and if I could be called a 'journalist' in the strict sense of the word was doubtful. But just like 'safety situation', 'journalist' is a flexible notion.<sup>140</sup>

Like the other reporters Grunberg freely conveys the impression events or people make on him. Yet, his interpretations of for instance the facial expression of the people he interviews are more idiosyncratic. Grunberg's interview with an Iraqi sheik clearly illustrates this:

"Are you going to vote?" I ask the sheik. "Do you order your people to vote?"  
There are regional elections in Iraq in October 2008.  
Voting seems something the sheik has never heard of. From his facial expression I gather that what flees are for a dog, democracy is for people.<sup>141</sup>

His use of such rather far-fetched comparisons clearly influences the image of the sheik he conveys. Moreover, it draws attention to the subjectivity of his observations. Grunberg even takes it a step further by imagining himself in the shoes of the people he interviews, reflecting on what they might be thinking.

<sup>138</sup> Harbers, "Between fact and fiction," 82.

<sup>139</sup> Harbers, "Between Fact and Fiction," 76-77.

<sup>140</sup> Arnon Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," in *Kamermeisjes en soldaten. Arnon Grunberg onder de mensen* (Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 2009), 11.

<sup>141</sup> Arnon Grunberg, "Irak," in *Kamermeisjes en soldaten. Arnon Grunberg onder de mensen* (Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 2009), 260.

I wondered whether the lieutenant-colonel really would catch a few winks, and if he did whether he would dream about Afghanistan, or still about the plains of Germany. And about his tanks, which would be at the former East-German border within two hours. Not as a maneuver this time, but the real thing. Maybe the Russians would show up anyway. You can never tell. Anything is possible.<sup>142</sup>

He employs this strategy frequently, which makes the characterizations of the different persons highly subjective, and sometimes rather grounded in Grunberg's imagination than in reality. Putting himself in the shoes of the people he talks to can be seen as a way around the journalistic restriction of portraying the thoughts of someone other than the author himself. Grunberg might not break this rule that way, but his impression of the thoughts and feelings of the people he talks to is highly subjective. And again, such obvious subjectivity draws attention to his active part in the representation of reality.

### ***Imagery and cultural critique***

Another way Grunberg guides the interpretation of his readership is by the imagery he employs. Apart from conveying the usual *couleur locale*, the evocative way Grunberg depicts his environment plays a significant role on the ideological level of the story as well. Like in Jaulmes' description of *Amérak*, the comparisons and metaphors Grunberg uses to depict the military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan form a cohesive interpretative framework of the events he experiences. Yet, his unrelenting irony destabilizes his accounts and makes it impossible to fixate Grunberg's moral or ideological position. Pivotal in the metaphoric framework is the recurrent comparison between the ISAF-mission and an all-in budget holiday. In this comparison the romantic as well as the idealistic notion of war collides with the triviality of everyday military reality. On his first trip to Afghanistan Grunberg writes for example: "Except for the uniforms, it looked like we were waiting for the charter flight to Mallorca."<sup>143</sup> After his arrival at the military camp he develops this comparison further by depicting the military environment in terms of everyday life on a camping site:

Then I wriggle into my thermal underwear, put on my slippers and head for the shower. The shower is a five minute walk from my tent.

There are, Major Robert told me, good showers and bad showers, just as there are good toilets and bad toilets. A camp like this has laws of its own.<sup>144</sup>

Grunberg considers the entire military endeavour to be a manifestation of "active tourism".<sup>145</sup> Similar to Jaulmes, he depicts the soldiers as interfering in a country they know nothing about and could not care less about apart from some fake souvenirs. Instead of adjusting to local customs, the Western armies, in particular the Americans, have tried to recreate a small version of their own society and culture. Grunberg's portrayal of what the soldiers perceive as a small oasis of Western civilisation can be read as an ironic *demasqué* of the mission. The replica of Coney Island in the camp, including large commercial fast food chains like Pizza Hut, Burger King and Tim Hortons all become symbols of an alienated Western consumer culture.

<sup>142</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 15-16.

<sup>143</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 12.

<sup>144</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 35.

<sup>145</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 21.

An attempt has been made in wood to imitate Coney Island in miniature. Unfortunately, the construction has never been finished. Along the boardwalk are little shops where you can buy souvenirs, there is a tailor, and a Burger King in the back of a truck. There is a Pizza Hut and a Tim Hortons where you can buy iced cappuccino and doughnuts. The doughnuts, however, are sold out.<sup>146</sup>

Although these depictions are still playful in their mockery of the mission, they are connected to a more serious ideological critique, in which the military mission is rendered as a form of modern colonialism. Grunberg undercuts the emphasis of the Western armies on the humanitarian nature of their peace enforcement missions by showing both the paternalistic arrogance and hypocrisy of this attitude as well as the illusion of treating democracy i.e. capitalism as an export product. The soldiers' feelings of superiority are expressed by a major who says: "Primitive, but beautiful people, those Afghans, [...] and everything tomorrow. But in the end you manage to get it done."<sup>147</sup> From this perspective the army is an important exponent of twenty-first century colonialism.

Another telling example can be found in the way the army tries to win over the hearts and minds of the population in Iraq.

'What are you doing?' the lieutenant says.

'We are taking a stroll,' they say.

'You need a basketball field,' the lieutenant says.

'I will make sure that you get a basketball field.'<sup>148</sup>

Rather than engaging in a conversation between equals, they project their Western needs on the Iraqis. Grunberg reflects on this by saying: "We are Santa Claus in a camouflage suit."<sup>149</sup> The ironic metaphor contrasts the joy of Christmas with the grim situation in Iraq. Moreover, it is used to criticize American capitalistic ideology that wants to buy the peaceful cooperation of the local population with consumer goods or infrastructural improvement. That such a strategy is not very successful is illustrated by Grunberg's depiction of his arrival in Afghanistan.

Tents, the occasional jeep driving by, a French soldier out jogging. So this is Kabul, or at least that part of Kabul safe enough for us Westerners who have come to bring stability, peace and prosperity to this impoverished land.<sup>150</sup>

Grunberg ironically shows the Pyrrhic victory that is often celebrated with regard to countries like Iraq or Afghanistan by pointing out that only small parts of Afghanistan are actually under control.

### ***Irony and ambivalence***

Yet, Grunberg's criticism on the Western interference in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq is not as clear-cut as it might seem. Grunberg constantly highlights the process of meaning-making by disclosing the ambiguity of his implicit value judgments. Subsequently, his accounts remain highly ambivalent. Any attempt to give meaning to an event is generally unsettled because through his

<sup>146</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 31.

<sup>147</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 33.

<sup>148</sup> Grunberg, "Irak," 258.

<sup>149</sup> Grunberg, "Irak," 259.

<sup>150</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 24.

ironic remarks Grunberg plays with possible expectations and connotations. As literary scholar Linda Hutcheon argues, irony can be seen as a discursive practice that is the result of a discrepancy between the literal and inferred meaning of an utterance, in combination with an attitude towards both meanings.<sup>151</sup> According to her, irony can certainly not be defined as meaning the exact opposite of what is said. Such a definition ignores one of the key characteristics of irony: ambiguity. As Hutcheon explains:

The “ironic” meaning is not, then, simply the unsaid meaning, and the unsaid is not always a simple inversion or opposite of the said: it is always different - *other than* and more than the said. This is why irony cannot be trusted: it undermines stated meaning by removing the semantic security of “one signifier: one signified” and by revealing the complex inclusive, relational and differential nature of ironic meaning-making. If you will pardon the inelegant terms, irony can only “complexify”; it can never “disambiguate”[.]<sup>152</sup>

She thus argues that irony makes the meaning of an utterance instable. Both the literal and the inferred meaning exist alongside each other, and the reader continuously alternates between both of them.<sup>153</sup> The use of irony then undermines the construction of a stable, unequivocal meaning and this instability highlights the meaning making process. Moreover, it can raise doubt about the sincerity of the person being ironic, making it impossible to determine her or his attitude towards an event or person.

This delineation of irony offers a fruitful perspective on Grunberg’s reportages. His ironic remarks stress how difficult it is to give moral positions an empirical foundation. Throughout his reportages, Grunberg varies and subverts his own moral positions. He uses irony to simultaneously display and question the assumptions and norms underlying his own moral judgments and those of his sources. A good example of Grunberg’s ambivalence is his portrayal of the soldiers. In his reportages on Afghanistan, for instance, he undercuts the exaggerated heroic connotations of war and the army by showing its connection with fictional representations such as *Apocalypse Now*.<sup>154</sup> When he asks sergeant Jordy why he joined the army, the soldier explains by quoting Martin Sheen:

“Do you remember what Martin Sheen says at the start? *‘I’m here a week now, waiting for a mission, getting softer. Every minute I stay in this room, I get weaker. And every minute Charlie squats in the bush, he gets stronger.’* That’s why I joined the army.”

A member of the *Apocalypse Now* sect, you didn’t run into them very often anymore. But I was a member as well, and had no trouble following his lead.<sup>155</sup>

The quote from an epic film about Vietnam War emphasizes the soldier’s boyish and romanticized longing for the adrenaline rush of war.

Grunberg further undercuts elevated ideas about the nature of peace enforcement missions by contrasting them with the trivial details of everyday life in the military camp. Grunberg conveys the monotonous life within the military camp and shows that the soldiers figuring in his accounts are

<sup>151</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *Irony’s Edge. The Theory and Politics of Irony* (London/New York: 1995), 11.

<sup>152</sup> Hutcheon, *Irony’s Edge*, 13.

<sup>153</sup> Hutcheon, *Irony’s Edge*, 12-13, 57-66.

<sup>154</sup> In the reportages on Afghanistan Grunberg makes several references to the movie *Apocalypse Now* - Francis Ford Coppola’s adaptation of Conrad’s renowned novel *Heart of Darkness*, which can be read as a critique of Western colonialism. Through this intertextual reference Grunberg also reinforces the colonial critique, that he conveyed through his imagery.

<sup>155</sup> Grunberg, “Afghanistan I,” 19-20.

mainly concerned with daily issues, which is illustrated nicely by the same sergeant Jordy who is preoccupied with the question whether he has brought enough Dutch cheese to the foreign desert.

**“[B]ut this time I brought a cheese-slicer.” He grinned triumphantly. Then, as though relating confidential information, he said: “Once they find out you have cheese, everyone wants a piece. But if you let them cut the cheese with a pocketknife, it’s gone before you know it. This time I brought a cheese-slicer, so everyone gets a thin slice, you know what I mean? So this time they won’t eat all my cheese right in front of me.” I felt a fondness for this Sergeant Jordy, who would not enter Afghanistan unprepared.**<sup>156</sup>

By playing with the stereotypical thrifty nature of the Dutch, Grunberg shows the contrast between the triviality of such issues and the harrowing situation in Afghanistan.

But when Grunberg experiences a missile attack on the camp, the emotions he feels, reinforce the romantic clichés that he undercuts earlier through irony. The idea of being in a potentially life threatening situation seems to heighten his senses and provides him with an existential thrill that he has never experienced before.

**Listening to the air-raid siren I’m overcome by a mad joy, an excitement the likes of which I have never felt before. They want to kill me, therefore I am.**<sup>157</sup>

In this scene Grunberg experiences something like the captivating sensation the soldiers talk about, and his description thus confirms the romantic image of war. This is reinforced by his reflection on warfare in general at the end of his last accounts of his trip to Afghanistan.

**But in the end it’s about the overpowering feeling that comes sneaking up on you, out of nowhere: the brutish and joyful realization that you exist. Without ambiguity, without reserve, without pesky buts. And, right on its heels, comes that fleeting glimpse of invincibility.**<sup>158</sup>

Grunberg genuinely seems to appreciate the primordial thrill that draws people to go to war time and again. This way Grunberg undercuts his unfavourable judgement, leaving the reader wondering which image of the soldiers and army life is true. By moving back and forth between stances, he stresses the ambiguity of social reality and the impossibility of an unequivocal interpretation and representation. Moreover, by showing how *Apocalypse Now* offers an interpretative frame, he suggests that fiction and reality are more intricately connected than is generally admitted, particularly by journalists.

To uncover the underlying mechanisms of the way reality is represented and the role of ideology in this process seems to be one of the fundamental goals that Grunberg pursues in his reportages. He continuously unmasks the assumptions and norms that underlie certain morals, never offering a clear-cut alternative. His ambiguous portrayal of the army points to Grunberg’s distrust of ideology in general, but also the incapacity to overcome its influence on the representation of reality. For Grunberg religiously inspired convictions or moral values and ideals like democratic freedom are used strategically to mask economic motives. At the end of his stay as embedded reporter with the

<sup>156</sup> Grunberg, “Afghanistan I,” 13–14.

<sup>157</sup> Grunberg, “Afghanistan I,” 39.

<sup>158</sup> Grunberg, “Afghanistan I,” 52.

US army he explicitly communicates this view in an almost Neo-Marxist way:

If there is anything I have learned in Iraq it is that all beliefs are fed by money and thus by power. What looks like blind fanaticism from a distance, is economy from up front. That we have remained fairly blind to the economy of beliefs is a form of exoticism.<sup>159</sup>

Thus, Grunberg paints a picture of a world in which morality is nothing but a cover-up for economic motives. The characterization of Western attitudes and behavior as a form of exoticism calls his own moral judgment - his dismissal of US strategy - into question. If ideology is ultimately solely driven by economic considerations, dismissing the strategy of the American army of 'bribing' these countries into democracy and peace would mean taking a hypocritical moral high ground.

In that vein Grunberg prophesizes about the morality of the 'new man' as he is about to leave the Green Zone in Iraq. This would be a mercenary with no other convictions than staying alive. This 'new man' would pledge allegiance to anyone who can facilitate this aim in the best way, which suggests that the world would be at the mercy of the mechanisms of uninhibited capitalism.

In the car next to the machine gun under the keffiyeh I remember the words a wine critic of the *Financial Times*: 'I have seen the future. It is Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc.' I have seen the new man. He is a mercenary. Other than Machiavelli thought, mercenaries can be effective. They know one thing: that it is better to kill than to be killed. Who wants to write the story of the new man should go embedded with mercenaries. Or even better: become a mercenary.<sup>160</sup>

Yet, Grunberg relates this, on first sight unambiguous, statement to a phrase of a wine critic about the future of wine. By contrasting the war zone with vinology, a field with a particularly snobbish reputation and notoriously arcane vocabulary that is mocked for its empty phraseology, Grunberg undermines his rather grim view on morality and its future. Moreover, by comparing himself with the wine critic he questions the authority of any subsequent attempts he might undertake to make sense of war. Once more he unsettles his attempt to interpret reality. His use of irony does not erase the critique Grunberg raises in his accounts, but shows the fundamental ambiguity of the Western involvement with the Middle East.

Thus, what Grunberg ultimately shows through his accounts is the failure of any attempt to provide a monolithic interpretation of reality. By use of estranging imagery, his unremitting irony and consequently ambivalence, Grunberg deconstructs the moral viewpoints of the parties involved in the war. By carrying the reader along with his own observations, thoughts, conversations and reflections, Grunberg emphasizes his active and subjective role in the process of representing reality and meaning-making. On an implicit level he creates a meta-perspective in which the epistemological problems of the journalistic process of representing reality are highlighted. He thus makes the reader feel the impossibility of a straightforward interpretation and moral judgment of social reality in the Middle East. In the words of David Eason, Grunberg "[calls] attention to discourse as a mode for interpreting "the real", and simultaneously conveys the difficulties of giving an unequivocal representation of reality."<sup>161</sup> This contrasts with mainstream journalistic discourse in which an unambiguous and transparent picture of reality is provided. Grunberg adopts a skeptical

<sup>159</sup> Grunberg, "Iraq," 270.

<sup>160</sup> Arnon Grunberg, "Groene Zone," in *Kamermeisjes en soldaten. Arnon Grunberg onder de mensen* (Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 2009), 280.

<sup>161</sup> Eason, "New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture," 146.

and self-reflective form of reporting, which in his eyes is the most honest form of reporting and in that sense gives a better picture of reality in its inherent opacity than the forms of journalism that do not question the epistemological claims of reporting.<sup>162</sup> Yet, the fact that people had a hard time accepting his truth claim suggests that this far-reaching questioning of journalism's ability to represent reality truthfully undermines his journalistic authority and that of journalism in general. This might be the reason that the other reporters mostly stay within bounds of the ethnographic realism. To be able to work as a professional reporter means at least making an attempt to represent reality without immediately undercutting it. The fact that Grunberg is first and foremost recognized as a novelist allows him to stay faithful to the decentring process and not ultimately return to a coherent conclusion. At the same time, this is also part of the reason why he remains an outsider within the journalistic domain.

## Conclusion

The development towards a society and culture in which ideas about postmodernity play a central role that sociologists like Beck and Giddens discern has according to them led to a demonopolization of truth. This has also affected journalism and relates to the demise of a period of high modernism in journalism, which has unsettled the professional framework of journalism. This has led to the contestation of the objectivity regime as the professional with regard to quality journalism. These developments are inextricably tied to the commercial adversity that haunts journalism, the quality press in particular. These changing circumstances have led to a search for new and appealing forms of journalism that do not harm the cultural authority and trustworthiness of quality journalism. Within this context, storytelling techniques and subsequently personal experience and emotions have (re)gained a more prominent position within journalistic discourse. It challenges the detached-rationality of factual accounts by offering an alternative that revalues experience and emotions, which Van Zoonen has captured under the umbrella of *I-Pistemology*.

My analysis of the reportages from award winning reporters from the three countries shows that all reportages adopt a bottom-up approach to the news and display a renewed and overt appreciation of experience and emotion that had moved to the margins of journalism discourse during the preceding high modern period. By integrating these elements these quality accounts draw closer to popular journalism. It is important to distinguish between the different ways this plays out in the texts, for the different forms convey a divergent perspective on journalism's epistemological foundations and challenge the affordances of the objectivity regime to different degrees. The reportages by Minoui, Jaulmes and part of Luyendijk's accounts stretch the boundaries of the objectivity regime somewhat, but ultimately incorporate the storytelling characteristics within the framework of objective journalism by only conveying the experiences and emotions of the sources they quote. Although Jaulmes' accounts employ the detached and depersonalized convention of the objectivity regime, his use of critical imagery still implicitly conveys his opinion, indicating the erosion of the opposition between factual reporting and commentary even without explicitly challenging objective journalism.

Yet, Luyendijk has also written openly subjective accounts, which abandon and challenge the objectivity regime like the accounts of Fisk and Grunberg. To a certain extent resuscitate the French and Dutch reportage tradition of before the war with the reporter's mediating subjectivity as the organizing principle, but particularly Luyendijk and Grunberg add a layer of epistemological reflection



to the naïve empiricism of the *grand reporters* of the past. Fisk does not adopt such a (self-)reflective way of reporting and to a certain extent still subscribes to the same fundamental assumption as objective journalism, i.e. that journalism has the right tools to give a truthful representation of reality. However, Fisk employs a different set of tools. His highly personalized accounts are rooted in the authority of Fisk's status as eyewitness. The authoritative language he uses leaves no room for hesitation or ambiguity, and conveys no doubt about the apparent subjectivity of the reportages in relation to its truth status. In that sense it can be viewed a return to a non-reflective common sense empiricism, which shows parallels with the way popular journalism shapes its truth claims. Drawing on Beck's argument about the demonopolization of truth such a development is one possible answer to the loss of certainty that accompanies the collapse of the modern trust in rational-positivistic knowledge underlying the objectivity regime.

The (self-)reflective journalism of Luyendijk and Grunberg can be seen as the other side of the same coin. Their journalism practice also expresses the declining trust in the affordances the objectivity regime, but they come up with a different answer than Fisk. They both opt for a reporting form that incorporates the reporting process into the story, showing the difficulties journalists encounter in their attempt to give a truthful representation of reality. Yet, whereas Luyendijk in spite of the uncertainties still offers a somewhat coherent picture of reality, Grunberg keeps undercutting every attempt he makes to present a coherent perspective on the world. Exactly that difference between Grunberg and the other reporters is part of the explanation why his accounts have met with so much doubt about their veracity. Whereas the *raison d'être* of journalism resides in its success of persuading the reader to accept a coherent representation of reality as true, Grunberg uses irony and ambiguity to destabilize his depictions of Afghanistan and Iraq. By highlighting the problematic nature of the meaning-making process, he gets his readers to think about the inherent partiality of any representation of the world.



## Conclusion

*“the centre cannot hold”<sup>1</sup>*

Within the current debate about journalism both journalists and scholars have suggested that the objectivity regime is losing its central position within journalism discourse. They argue that recent developments, such as the growing commercial pressures, the rise of online journalism, the emergence of myriad forms of citizen and participatory journalism, and broader epistemological changes in the perspective on reality, have eroded the objectivity regime. Although the practices and textual conventions of said regime are still widely used they have become an empty shell and do not refer to the underlying norms about trustworthy reporting.

In his eloquent essay ‘Would Journalism Please Hold Still!’ Michael Schudson reflects on the current resonance of the appeal - for scholars and journalists alike - to reconceptualize journalism in order to safeguard its role as information supplier within democratic society. He does not deny the importance and the timeliness of the attempts to ‘rethink’ journalism and he acknowledges that journalism finds itself in stormy weather, both financially and culturally speaking. What he objects to is the implicit suggestion that prior to the current situation within the media landscape journalism was a stable discourse with steady professional standards. In his eyes the self-evidence with which the affordances of the objectivity regime are referred to as ‘traditional’ journalism does not do justice to the dynamic nature of journalism history.<sup>2</sup>

### **Acknowledging the dynamic and complex nature of journalism history**

Schudson’s claim links up to one of the main arguments advanced in this thesis, namely that journalism history is determined by an ongoing historical struggle between competing journalistic conceptions. Within the context of European journalism history, objectivity as a term did indeed circulate in the three countries under study in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, it was a flexible notion that only had a modest influence on the journalistic debate. Moreover, the objectivity regime as an institutionalized professional practice has only dominated the journalism in the three countries for a relatively short period between roughly the mid-sixties and mid-nineties. Moreover, the norms were less stringently enforced within European newspapers than in the American press. By focusing on the cross-national textual characteristics of newspapers in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France against the background of the institutional context and the way journalists conceptualized their occupation this thesis offers a novel approach to the way journalism’s professional standards developed from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

1 From the poem “The Second Coming” by William Butler Yeats cited in Joan Didion, *Slouching towards Bethlehem: Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1990), 1.

2 Schudson, “Please hold still,” 191-194.

Longitudinal and comparative studies on the history of journalism practice are relatively scarce. By attending to such an approach, this thesis reveals the dynamic nature of journalism in these countries, a complexity which would easily go unnoticed within a single national context. Take for example the fact that most research into British press history has more or less ignored the long-lasting tradition of advertisement on the front page. Yet, from a comparative perspective the choice of some esteemed as well as popular dailies to only publish ads on the front page instead of use it to draw the attention of the reader becomes much more conspicuous as none of the Dutch and French dailies do this. This supports the idea that this fact cannot be explained solely by pointing to the commercial benefits of advertisement on the front page. It suggests that apart from many innovative developments the British press is also influenced by conservative forces that viewed news on the front page as a sensational strategy. Furthermore, most prior research into journalism history has focused on the commercial and institutional development of journalism or on the professional role perceptions of journalists. In such cases the accompanying textual developments are often assumed or based on a rather impressionistic inquiry into newspaper content. Conducting a systematic analysis of the way the textual conventions of journalism have developed, provides a fresh and revised perspective on journalism history in the three countries at hand.

Journalistic form is not a transparent way of packaging information, but “invites readers into a world molded and variegated to fit not only the conscious designs of journalists and the habits of readers, but also the reigning values in political and economic life.”<sup>3</sup> The characteristics of the journalistic form can be seen as an implicit way of communication between journalists and their audience. By employing certain textual conventions a journalist tries to convince the reader that the account in question has captured reality in a truthful way based on trustworthy norms and routines. It thus performs some sort of “social magic” by transforming an interpretation into social reality and can therefore best be regarded as a performative discourse.<sup>4</sup> If the textual characteristics of a newspaper play an important role in communicating and convincing the readership to trust the information, studying the particular journalistic form can reveal the way journalism conceptualizes the way it would ideally gather newsworthy information and present it to the public, or in other words what “imagined relationship” journalism has with reality.<sup>5</sup> Thus, journalistic form seals the silent contract between journalists and their audience and plays an important factor in journalism’s status within society as a valorized domain of truth production. My examination from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards of the development of reporting and the genre of the reportage in particular therefore provides revealing and insightful new information with regard to the way journalism practice has evolved throughout history. Within this context Broersma’s categorization of journalism in three ideal-typical conceptions (reflective journalism, event-centered information journalism, and event-centered story journalism) has proved helpful. It directs attention to the wide range of possible characteristics of journalism discourse throughout history and because of the ahistorical and ideal-typical nature of the categorization does not function as a historical straitjacket.

What makes the scrutiny of these textual conventions particularly interesting is the manner in which they relate to the way journalists have publicly conceptualized their profession and positioned themselves in these debates on its societal role and function. This thesis shows that it is crucial to avoid an instrumental perspective on the way norms, routines and textual conventions relate to each other; they are not necessarily a perfect match. All too often the norms journalists have expressed

<sup>3</sup> Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Identity and Representation. Elements for a Critical Reflection on the Idea of Region,” in *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. Pierre Bourdieu (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 223.

<sup>5</sup> Barnhurst & Nerone, *Form of News*, 3.

are taken at face value as trustworthy indicators of the textual characteristics. Moreover, in certain cases the opposite also occurs. Chalaby for instance discerns the rise of the objectivity regime in Britain at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century based on several textual characteristics of British and French newspapers.<sup>6</sup> Yet, Hampton's analysis of the debates on journalism suggests that objectivity was rejected as a norm within the daily press before the Second World War.<sup>7</sup>

Another related pitfall is to conceive of notions like news, facts, objectivity, or even journalistic quality as having a steady definition across history and cultures. For instance, assuming that what constituted a fact was the same in 19<sup>th</sup> century France as it is in late 20<sup>th</sup> century Britain can lead to an anachronistic and overly uniform conception of European journalism history. This is not to say that there are no similarities or that any comparison denies the singularity of any particular historical or cultural context or development. Yet, one needs to tread carefully in this respect. Deconstructing these broad conceptual notions into their different parts and looking at the way these are exactly defined creates awareness of their cultural and historical differences. Consequently, I was able to take the dynamic nature of these concepts into account in my analysis of the development of reporting and the reportage. Bourdieu's perspective on the comparison of historical developments is insightful in this respect. He points to the difficulty of determining historical or cultural parallels without disregarding the idiosyncratic nature of an event or development - and the other way around:

One of the great problems faced by sociologists is how to avoid falling into one or the other of two symmetrical illusions. On the one hand, there is the sense of something that has never been seen before. (There are sociologists who love this business, and it's very much the thing, especially on television, to announce the appearance of incredible phenomena or revolutions.) And, on the other hand (mostly from conservative sociologists), there's the opposite, "the way it always has been," "there's nothing new under the sun," "there'll always be people on top and people on the bottom," "the poor are always with us; and the rich too..." The already-great risk of falling into such traps is all the greater because historical comparison is extremely difficult.<sup>8</sup>

By relating the formal characteristics of the actual journalistic output to the role perceptions journalists have expressed, this thesis takes into account the historical and cultural variability of notions such as objectivity. Moreover, it teases out certain discrepancies between journalists' everyday practice and the norms and routines they invoke to establish their cultural authority as faithful servants of truth and reality. A good example is the emphasis on active reporting routines in the journalistic debate after the First World War and its much smaller role within everyday practice that the results suggest. Instead of accepting the role perceptions journalists have formulated as a trustworthy image of their practice, my analysis draws attention to the strategic role the explicit expression of journalistic norms performs within the debate about journalism's role in society. Throughout history journalists have presented 'best practices' as the rule rather than the exception, and have formulated professional standards that are hard to abide by in practice. This relates to Broersma's claim that journalism aims for a "triple-A status" i.e. being in the position to practice journalism in an autonomous, authoritative and attractive manner.<sup>9</sup> These individual aims can interfere with each other as becomes clear in my analysis. For example, attracting a large audience is often at odds with the acquisition of cultural authority.

<sup>6</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 305-306.

<sup>7</sup> Hampton, "The 'objectivity' ideal," 477-478.

<sup>8</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *On Television* (New York: New Press, 1998), 43.

<sup>9</sup> Marcel Broersma, "Unbearable Limitations," 27.

This research's emphasis on the development of textual conventions, in which the broad scope and representativeness of a quantitative content analysis is paired with the analytic depth of qualitative case studies, suggests that the existing image of the development of journalism in Europe needs adjustment and fine tuning. The mixed methods approach has proved fruitful as the broad and representative nature of the quantitative examination of newspaper content and the in-depth narrative analysis of a key genre like the reportage mutually reinforce each other; central issues within the broader picture, such as the particular way active reporting routines were shaped, can be analyzed more in-depth. At the same time exactly that broader overview divulges information about the extent of that particular issue with regard to journalism discourse in general, which would otherwise remain unclear. This does not detract from the fact that it has taken great effort to attune both approaches to each other, always leaving some room between them as the case studies only focus on one particular genre.

The results support my theoretical point of departure. Early on in this thesis I asserted that the 'grand narrative of journalism history', which implicitly or explicitly underlies most scholarly inquiries into the development of journalism in Europe, is normative in nature and reduces the complexity of the discursive development. It implicitly assumes the objectivity regime as the natural framework of professional journalism, thereby creating an Archimedean point to which journalism in any period of time is measured against. What is more, this perspective fails to recognize the intricate relation between popular and serious dailies and the reciprocal influence they have on each other. The development of journalism discourse is for an important part influenced by the negotiation of both over the accepted professional standards.

## Debunking the grand narrative of journalism history

What my analysis of the development of reporting and in particular that of the reportage shows is that journalism in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France was indeed experiencing changes at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The argumentative form of reflective journalism was losing its dominance and felt the competition of an emerging event-centered journalism practice, relying on active reporting routines. Yet, reflective journalism was not replaced, but rather complemented by this new conception of journalism. These conceptions of journalism existed next to each other, but - as is in general the case for historical developments - were not neatly separated. Therefore, mash-up forms of reflective and event-centered journalism appeared. In all countries researched, the frontrunners in this respect were the younger popular dailies looking to make up in circulation what they lacked in cultural authority, boosting the development of this type of journalism further. These papers were reproached as sensational and 'feather-brained', which put the journalistic innovations in a negative light. In all three countries, without exception, journalists were still experimenting with these new active reporting routines and were trying to find the right form to package the information they acquired. Moreover, these forms only appeared to play a marginal role within newspaper journalism and had not yet gathered the esteem they would acquire in the inter-war period. Chalaby's suggestion that journalism in France was lagging behind in this respect is therefore proven to be untrue.<sup>10</sup>

This conclusion is reinforced by my narrative analysis of the reportage. The reportages in the early period of the First World War suggest that forms of active reporting in all three countries were tightly bound to the mediating subjectivity of the journalist witnessing reality. The emphasis on the presence of the reporter, which simultaneously made clear that the account was the journalist's

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<sup>10</sup> Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 304-314.

personal impression of reality, played a pivotal role in the authority of such accounts. This outlook on journalism capitalized on the eyewitness experience rather than disconnecting newsworthy information from it. The main difference between the British on the one hand and Dutch and French reportages on the other resides in the colorful depiction of atmosphere in the latter. This way of reporting was in part infused by their orientation on literary discourse, which at that time was determined for a large part by Naturalism and Realism. Both literary movements emphasized colorful and lifelike depictions of reality as an inherent and pivotal part of writing. In Britain these ties between journalism and literature were in the course of being severed, which can be regarded as an important, but gradual step towards a stricter delineation of journalism discourse. The boundaries between journalism and literature kept on being more pervasive in France and the Netherlands, which remained so until after the Second World War.

The censored and therefore distorted coverage during the Great War had shown the importance of professional standards on which journalists and the readership could rely to safeguard truthful reporting practices. In all countries journalists were debating the best norms, routines and forms to ensure trustworthy coverage, but the outcomes differed. Journalistic development in the inter-war period shows a further divergence in this respect between the British case versus the more similar French and Dutch situation. In the latter two the reportages in this era maintained their strong orientation on literary discourse, co-determining the professional ideals within journalism discourse. Conversely, British journalism moved towards a more detached way of reporting, cutting the bonds between information and experience. This is often seen as proof for the idea that in France - and the Netherlands for that matter - the process of professionalization of journalism set in later. Yet in all three countries professional standards emerged that centered on active reporting. The commercial success of the innovative popular dailies forced the serious dailies to reconsider their negative attitude towards these active reporting routines and forms. That in turn reinforced the growing recognition and authority of forms such as the reportage and the interview. Although they still remained scarce within the newspaper, event-centered journalism moved to the center of journalism's professional framework. Factuality was acknowledged as a pivotal norm in this respect, but what exactly constituted a fact had not yet crystallized. Moreover, within this context the notion of objectivity entered the debate and journalists positioned themselves vis-à-vis this norm and adopted certain aspects related to it. However, nowhere was the objectivity regime with its emphasis of both an impartial and detached way of reporting fully embraced. Unpacking factuality and objectivity reveals the differences within this process in the respective countries.

In Britain factual reporting was conceived as detached information that was independent of any personal experience. Yet, to conclude that British journalism adopted the objectivity regime in this period is a crude and unwarranted inference. Drawing conclusions or making value judgments based on this detached factual information was not considered problematic. A similar case can be made for France and the Netherlands, disproving the claim that factual reporting had not yet emerged within French journalism discourse. The professional ideal of French and Dutch journalism revolved around the artistic figure of the *grand reporter*. Colored descriptions rooted in the personal experience of the reporter were embraced as a sign of authenticity. Such descriptions were regarded as factual and were not considered to obstruct the possibility of an objective account. This can be explained by the fact that objectivity in France and the Netherlands was not conceived as detached reporting, but as the adoption of - or at least the attempt to maintain - an impartial position in terms of value judgments of the reporter about the event or situation in question. Although Dutch journalists delineated objectivity in a similar way, the reportages by Elout show some evidence that in these

accounts opinionated elements were still allowed or at least condoned. Journalists in the respective countries thus only adopted elements of the objectivity regime and maintained characteristics that were opposite to this professional framework.

In spite of the differences between journalism in Britain and journalism in France and the Netherlands, their alternative perspectives on the preferred form of reporting show a shared aim of trying to diminish the influence of the subjectivity of the reporter on the representation of reality. I argue that both types of reporting should be seen as manifestations of an underlying attempt to universalize the representation of reality. In both cases journalists tried to offer a coherent and complete representation of reality that was considered truthful and trustworthy by anyone. Whereas the British reporters aimed to depersonalize the information in their accounts by effacing any trace of the underlying inherently subjective experience of the reporter, the French maintained their faith in the mediating subjectivity of the reporter, whose experiences were considered to be representative for the entire public.<sup>11</sup> This links up to Muhlmann's perspective on the development of journalism in France, which relied on the "witness-ambassador" rather than depersonalized observation:

[S]uch journalists present themselves as simple witnesses, but witnesses legitimated by an entire community, as singular but mandated and justified observers. Thus, the gaze of the journalist says 'I' and 'we' at the same time.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, in the inter-war period, event-centered reporting moved to the center of the debate on journalism. Journalists were attempting in varying ways to conceptualize a journalism able to deal with the impact of the reporter's subjectivity on the veracity of coverage. They flirted with the objectivity regime, but only adopted certain aspects of it. Moreover, the normative debate did not represented everyday practice yet and on-site reporting and interviewing kept a low profile in the newspaper, reinforcing the idea of the discrepancy between the normative debate and everyday practice. In this period elements of the different ideal-typical conceptions Broersma formulated can be found mixed-in together rather than having crystallized into separate practices, like they would after the Second World War.

My analysis suggests that from this moment onwards journalism's aim to provide a unifying representation of the world was delineated more uniformly and precisely in a coherent set of norms, routines and forms, which was in part infused by the negative experiences with the press in wartime. The rise in the use of sources and direct quotes, as demonstrated by my findings, indicates that active reporting and interviewing not only were the norm, but now also dominated newspaper content. Throughout the 1960s, newspaper journalism in all three countries embraced the objectivity regime with detached and impartial reporting heavily drawing on information from sources as one of its main characteristics. The full embrace of the active reporting routines and forms within the framework of the objectivity regime meant a much more narrow delineation of the accepted journalistic standards. Reflective journalism got sidetracked, but nevertheless remained present at the margins of journalism discourse. This process of uniformization also meant that the serious and popular dailies approached each other in terms of journalism practice. Therefore, the serious papers, which now had adopted routines, such as interviewing, and textual characteristics, like the use of direct quotes, they had earlier called sensational, needed to distinguish themselves from the popular press to maintain their esteem within society. They did this by accusing the popular press

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Chalaby, "Anglo-American Invention," 312.

<sup>12</sup> Muhlmann, *Political History*, 23.

of sensationalism. The journalists of the quality dailies argued that their use of routines and forms similar to the popular press was, nonetheless, more truthful and trustworthy. They backed such claims up by asserting that they were the only ones really adhering to the norms of the objectivity regime, like detachment and impartiality, implicitly as well as explicitly positioning the popular press as failing to live up to these standards. This polarized debate established the widely accepted opposition between quality and popular papers and reinforced the growing dominance of the objectivity regime. In this period event-centered journalism let go of the reflective elements it still integrated before the war and its two branches crystallized, bringing them closer to the ideal-typical opposition between event-centered information journalism versus event-centered story journalism.

Yet, the norms were never as stringently enforced in Great Britain, the Netherlands and France as in the United States, which can be related to the particular context in which the objectivity regime became the accepted professional framework. It coincided with the rise of a broad countercultural movement in the 1960s and early 1970s, in which students, journalists and scholars alike critiqued the ideological character of the objectivity regime as supporting the dominant perspective of the people in power thereby undermining its epistemological claim to represent reality in a balanced and detached manner. Newspaper journalism was only affected marginally by this critical culture and it mainly contributed to a more pragmatic perspective on the objectivity norm. Furthermore, the rise of television created a media culture that reinforced journalists to express their personality and individuality. My analysis of the reportages about the Parisian revolt suggests that these developments allowed journalists, particularly those who had acquired a certain esteem, to address their readers in a more subjective manner. Yet, the reportages by Cees Nooteboom suggest that the tradition of the artistic *grand reporter* had a diminished prominence within journalistic discourse. Nooteboom's highly colored and committed insight into the events was seen as an addition, and was marked off from the mainstream accounts by presenting his accounts as personal columns, offering an additional subjective insight in the events.

All in all, the sixties ushered in a period of "high modernism" in journalism, in which the professional standards became more or less self-evident. Even the growing competition for advertisement income and the attention of the public, which resulted in strategic company mergers, co-operation on the physical production of dailies, and rationalization of that production process, was in this period not felt as an immediate threat to the professional standards. Despite some suspicion by journalists, media critics and the readership alike, they accepted the necessity of such forms of press concentration to maintain a viable quality press that performed its role as society's watchdog. This changed from roughly the 1990s onwards, when the financial stability of the newspaper business came spiraling down. The permissive attitude towards commercialization transformed into anxiety towards the consequences of the growing importance of a commercial media logic. Journalists and scholars feared in particular for the sustenance of the quality press, which faced a dilemma: how much time investment into reporting on the traditional issues considered to be in the public interest was feasible if such topics did not cater to the general public's interests?

Such developments are often explained as the dumbing-down or tabloidization of the quality press. Yet, in line with earlier criticism of such a perspective, my analysis shows the normative and reductive nature of this perspective. Instead of a detailed and open-minded analysis of the recent developments, it assumes a false uniformity in this development and regards any deviation from the objectivity regime as a deterioration of the professional standards.

In addition, seeing these changes solely in terms of declining quality means accepting the objectivity regime as the one and only 'true' professional framework. This perspective disregards



substantial socio-cultural changes with regard to the representation of reality, truth, and cultural authority, which have denaturalized the formerly assumed standards for journalistic quality. I have adopted the term 'featurized journalism' to get away from this perspective and to offer a more nuanced insight into journalism in our contemporary postmodern society and culture. According to Beck, postmodern society is characterized by the demonopolization of truth. The valorized domains of knowledge production, such as science, politics and journalism, are losing authority as are the people that are a part of them. In general, the trust in the rational-positivist framework of objectivity as the standard for knowledge production these domains rely on, is losing its self-evidence.<sup>13</sup> This critique of the objectivity regime is not entirely new, but it has moved from the marginal circles of the intellectual elite to a doubt that is shared widely within broader culture as well. Within this context there is room for alternative takes on the ways truth and reality can be represented best next to the objectivity regime, which remains an influential professional framework. As part of this development personal experience and emotions are revalued as the basis of truth and knowledge about reality. Within journalism discourse this framework of *I-Pistemology* has resulted in journalistic articles that stretch, question or defy the affordances of the objectivity regime.

My scrutiny of the reportage suggests that at least some esteemed journalists are moving away from the objectivity regime. Within this framework, it is important to note that such developments are not clear-cut. Reporters do not make an either-or choice between fully crystallized conceptions of journalism. Rather, the opposing conceptions are often fused together in an attempt to improve professional reporting in trial-and-error fashion. Some reporters demonstrate how they have come to emphasize personal experience and emotions more, while maintaining their own position as detached and impartial reporters by outsourcing such elements to the people they interview. This way they remain within the bounds of the objectivity regime, although stretching its limits somewhat. However, there are also journalists whose reportages really undercut the detachment and impartiality of the objectivity regime by embracing the mediating subjectivity of the reporter as the pivotal filter through which reality is perceived. The way the truth claim is shaped in these personalized accounts can be quite distinctive. In this thesis, I have discerned three different types of personal reporting. The first is reminiscent of the witness-ambassador tradition and conveys a strong belief in eyewitness reporting as a trustworthy way of depicting reality. It therefore fits in with the tradition of ethnographic realism that Eason has outlined. Conversely, the second type is a typical example of what he has termed cultural phenomenology. This 'decentring' approach to reporting destabilizes the meaning-making process by constantly questioning the basic epistemological assumptions underlying journalism practice. Finally, the third type assumes an intermediate position vis-à-vis the other two and contains both destabilizing as well as universalizing tendencies. It suggests how hard it is to fuse a decentring journalism practice with the central task of journalists to convey information in a clear-cut manner.<sup>14</sup>

Returning to the issue which kicked off this conclusion, it can thus be said that one of the key academic contributions of this thesis is that it offers empirical corroboration of Schudson's critique of 'traditional journalism' as a notion maintaining the illusory idea of the historical stability of journalism practice. The wide acceptance of the objectivity regime as the 'traditional' model more than anything demonstrates its performative power as well as highlighting the historical amnesia that results from the felicity of the performative claim. The success of the objectivity regime with regard to the acceptance of journalism's truth claim has effaced the interpretational character of its

<sup>13</sup> Beck, "Reinvention of Politics," 24-31; At what moment this dominance sets in can differ per domain.

<sup>14</sup> Eason, "Image-world," 55-57; Muhlmann, *Political History*, 28-33.

representation of reality. Subsequently, it has naturalized the normative nature of the objectivity regime, thus presenting it as the self-evident journalism practice.

Nevertheless, the widely felt urgency to 'rethink' the conception of journalism within its contemporary context makes sense as well. In spite of substantial differences in journalism practice, the unifying goal of journalism has been dominant throughout most of the long 20<sup>th</sup> century. The performative power of these different forms of journalism all reside in journalism's ability to hide the interpretational character of any form of coverage and convince the reader that what they are getting is reality in its raw form. In that sense the destabilizing forces of reporting that have arisen within mainstream journalism in the past therefore can indeed be regarded as marking a fundamentally different way of covering reality. By reflecting on and thereby exposing the conventional nature of journalism the performative power journalism has relied on for so long is undermined. Decentring ways of reporting thus question the foundations upon which journalism has based its triple-A status. For that reason it is understandable that journalists have an ambivalent attitude towards this way of reporting and not many examples of reporting can be found, in which this decentring perspective prevails throughout the entire account. The impact and role of these decentring ways of reporting within the current journalism discourse should therefore not be overemphasized. Nevertheless, the most contemporary case study in this thesis demonstrates that, in this postmodern and thoroughly digitized age, destabilizing tendencies are gaining prominence. In my opinion, it is this disruptive nature of several of the current development within journalism that warrants the current attention for the reconceptualization of contemporary journalism and its position and role within society. It also shows that more research into the development of decentring journalism in relation to the many new and innovative journalistic initiatives is needed to gain further knowledge about the nature, extent and context of such a conception of journalism. Despite the fact that we live in a world in which people are increasingly media-savvy, the ever increasing breadth of information and information sources challenges our ability to determine trustworthy information. This seeming paradox makes it vital to thoroughly entertain and scrutinize the journalistic merit of an openly self-reflective form of covering the world.



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# Appendix I

## Codeboek Reporting on the boundaries of the public sphere

### Structuur Invoerformulier

Het invoerformulier bestaat eigenlijk uit verschillende formulieren, ingedeeld als hoofd- en subformulieren. De “buitenste rand” is het hoofdformulier. Daarin moeten o.a. de titel van de krant en de datum ingevoerd worden. Dit hoofdformulier geeft dus aan dat je bezig bent informatie in te voeren over een bepaalde krant op een bepaalde datum (bijv. Algemeen Handelsblad van 3 januari 1885). Elke krant bestaat uit meerdere artikelen en de informatie over deze artikelen voer je daarom in met het subformulier. Zo kunnen er verschillende artikelen gekoppeld kunnen worden aan één krant op een specifieke datum. Op artikelniveau bestaat er ook weer een soortgelijke hoofdformulier-subformulier structuur, één artikel kan namelijk meerdere auteurs, bronnen en afbeeldingen hebben.

Bij het invoeren van een bepaalde krant op een bepaalde datum moet daarom op de bovenste regel de informatie van het 'hoofdformulier krant' ingevoerd worden, waarna alle artikelen waaruit deze krant bestaat ingevoerd kan worden.

NB Het venster met het formulier moet gemaximaliseerd worden. Er zijn dan onderaan de pagina TWEE balken te zien. De onderste balk maakt een nieuwe krant van een bepaalde datum aan. Het bovenste balkje maakt een nieuw artikel aan BINNEN een bepaalde krant van een bepaalde datum aan. Gebruik altijd de bovenste van de twee balken om tussen artikelen heen en weer te klikken en om een nieuw artikel aan te maken.

### Krant

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Titel	Algemeen Handelsblad Ochtend	News style - Information model
	NRC Handelsblad	News style - Information model
	De Telegraaf	News style - Story model
	De Maasbode	Reflective style
	de Volkskrant	Reflective style
	Le Figaro	News style - Information model
	Le Petit Parisien	News style - Story model
	France Soir	News style - Story model
	La Croix	Reflective style
	London Times	News style - Information model
	Daily Mirror	News style - Story model
	Pall Mall Gazette	Reflective style
	Daily Mail	Reflective style
Land	Engeland	De keuze van het land is in de tabellen al gekoppeld aan de krant en hoeft dus niet meer ingevoerd te worden.
	Nederland	
	Frankrijk	
Editie	Ochtend	
	Middag/Avond	
Datum	dag-maand-jaar	bijv. 25-11-1981
Oppervlakte pagina	In cm <sup>2</sup>	Tot 1 cijfer achter de komma; Het gaat hier om een 'standaardmaat' voor de oppervlakte van één pagina. Deze wordt dan vermenigvuldigd met het aantal pagina's per krant om de totale oppervlakte te berekenen. Van die totale oppervlakte wordt nog de totale advertentie-oppervlakte afgetrokken. NB: Lege papierranden om de tekst heen weglaten.
Totaal aantal pagina's	Gehele getallen	
Totale oppervlakte advertenties	In cm <sup>2</sup>	Tot 1 cijfer achter de komma; Het gaat hier om de oppervlakte van alle advertenties in de krant bij elkaar opgeteld.

### Algemeen

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Artikel ID	Getal	Dit nummer wordt automatisch door Access toegewezen
Invoernummer	Getal	Geeft de plek van het artikel op een pagina aan (begint per pagina opnieuw op 1)
Paginnummer	Getal	
Oppervlakte artikel	In cm <sup>2</sup>	De oppervlakte van het artikel afgerond op één cijfer achter de komma.

### Aard van het nieuws

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Aard nieuws	Internationaal	Nieuws met betrekking op de internationale gemeenschap of op zaken met betrekking tot een specifiek ander land.
	Nationaal	Nieuws met betrekking tot het land waarin de krant gevestigd is.
	Niet van toepassing	NB: alleen mogelijk bij service, cartoons en fictie. Nieuwsberichten in principe altijd categoriseren.

### Zelfclassificatie

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Zelfclassificatie	Ja	Het genre van het artikel staat erbij aangegeven. (met name van belang voor interview / reportage) Zelfclassificatie moet niet verward worden met een vorm van katern- of thema-aanduiding boven een (reeks) artikel(en). Bij 'ingezonden brieven' wordt het feit dat dat erboven staat niet beschouwd als zelfclassificatie.
	Nee	

### Quotes

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Directe quotes	Ja	Bij letterlijke weergave van een spreker (signalen: aanhalingstekens). Criterium: iemand moet aan het woord komen in het stuk. Dit kan ook door middel van een oud citaat of een citaat dat van een andere plek afkomstig is. <b>Niet:</b> Citaten uit documenten
	Nee	In alle andere situaties dan hierboven staat aangegeven. Bijv. Indirecte weergave van persoonstekst

### Genre

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Genre	1. Nieuwsbericht	Feitelijke weergave van nieuwswaardige gebeurtenissen; meestal korte en bondig. Signaal: de eerste zin geeft de 'pointe' van het artikel weer (dit geldt met name voor de periode na WOII) <b>Niet:</b> Overzicht (2) <b>Niet:</b> Analyse (4)
	2. Overzicht	Overzicht van nieuwsfeiten uit bijv.: buitenland of andere media, waarbij de tekst (soms losjes) aan elkaar doorgeschreven is; dus niet een opsomming van zelfstandige berichten. Kan ook een serie citaten zijn over een bepaald onderwerp, of een 'ticker'-achtige opsomming van feitjes. <b>N.B.</b> In vroegere periodes kan de kop 'Buitenlands overzicht' verwarrend werken. Vaak gaat het hier niet om een daadwerkelijk overzicht, maar om een aantal losse artikelen over het buitenland.

Genre	3. Verslag	Zakelijk-feitelijke, chronologische weergave van een duidelijk afgegrensde (soms van te voren geplande) gebeurtenis (bijv. wedstrijd, parlamentszitting).
	4. Achtergrond/ nieuwsanalyse	Nadere blik op nieuwswaardige gebeurtenissen. Vormt een aanvulling op de nieuwsberichten, maar onderscheidt zich er van doordat analyse, interpretatie en explicatie een belangrijkere plek innemen dan de feiten zelf. Signaal: de beginzin geeft in dit geval vaak niet de hoofdzaak weer, maar wordt eerder gebruikt om de aanleiding weer te geven.
	5. Interview	Stuk dat een primaire ontmoeting weergeeft waarbij de auteur de geïnterviewde opzoekt. Het stuk is de representatie van een gesprek, hetgeen blijkt uit de vorm. <b>Niet:</b> als citaten in dienst staan van een reportage (8)
	6. Profiel/portret/ necrologie	Portret of levensloop van een persoon. Kan gemaakt zijn post mortem (necrologie) maar hoeft niet.
	7. Essay	Informatief en vaak betogend stuk dat niet primair nieuwswaardig is. Het gaat hierbij bijvoorbeeld om historische uiteenzettingen of analyses. <b>Niet:</b> opiniestuk (10)
	8. Reportage/feature	Stuk dat naast representatie van de gebeurtenis ook een representatie van de bijbehorende ervaring geeft. Vaak met behulp van een beeldende beschrijving en sfeertekening. Aanwijzingen zijn: beeldspraak, aanwezigheid van verteller (ik-figuur), spanningsopbouw, veel oog voor details van de setting (couleur locale), het illustrerend gebruik van citaten. <b>N.B. De auteur wordt in het opmerkingenvak vermeld</b>
	9. Hoofddredactioneel commentaar	Hoofddredactie geeft haar mening en beargumenteert deze. Deze artikelen zijn vrijwel nooit ondertekend.
	10. Opiniestuk	Auteur geeft zijn mening over een actueel en dus nieuwswaardig thema en beargumenteert deze.
	11. Recensie	Beargumenteerde mening over een cultureel product (bijv.: concert, boek, tentoonstelling). Er wordt gewaardeerd of geëvalueerd.
	12. Column	Regelmatig verschijnend, vormvast, ondertekend stuk waarin de persoonlijke impressie voorop wordt gesteld. Het kan gaan om een opiniestuk of om een subjectieve beschrijving van een of meerdere gebeurtenissen, maar ook om een uitgebreid recept. NB: vooral in vroegere periode moeilijker. Dan is het vaak een rubriek van één auteur waarin die zijn ei kwijt kan (zie Boissevain in Hbl of Brusse in NRC). Dan kan naar gelang de situatie een repo, interv, column of whatever zijn. Dan als zodanig classificeren. Column moet een persoonlijke visie op een onderwerp geven, niet zakelijk betogend (= dan opiniestuk).
	13. Fictie	Bijv.: Feuilleton. Bij dit genre wordt 'Geen onderwerp' ingevuld.

Genre	14. Ingezonden brief	Ingezonden door lezers. Bij opvallende onderwerpen of interessante personen wordt de naam of het onderwerp in het opmerkingenvak of logboek genoteerd. <b>Let op:</b> Tegenwoordig een vaste rubriek, maar vroeger minder geordend. <b>Niet:</b> stukken van correspondenten gepresenteerd als brief
	15. Mededeling krant (Rectificatie)	Feitelijke mededelingen door/namens de krant zelf of antwoorden op lezersbrieven. Dit genre krijgt bij rectificaties of bij de bekende loterij-achtige aanbiedingen (GB) <b>GEEN ONDERWERP</b> Het is ook een mededeling krant bij antwoorden op lezersvragen, NB: dan wel vermelden in commentaarvak! <b>Niet:</b> Algemeen relevante uiteenzettingen naar aanleiding van een ingezonden brief (vaak een vraag) (4) <b>Niet:</b> opiniërende mededelingen van de redactie (9) <b>Niet:</b> Service (zoals omschreven in 16)
	16. Service	Bijv.: televisiegids, inhoudsopgave, aankeliers, aankondigingen, publicaties van de overheid (burgerlijke stand, benoemingen), uitslagen sportwedstrijden, weer, beurskoersen, tv-gids, aanbestedingen, vergunningen, verstrekking subsidies. Serviceartikelen zoals inhoudsopgaves krijgen 'geen onderwerp'. <b>Niet:</b> Rouwadvertenties, deze vallen onder de advertenties
	17. Losse afbeelding	Afbeelding die op zichzelf staat en niet bij een artikel hoort. Soms staan er een aantal losse afbeeldingen naast elkaar die betrekking hebben op hetzelfde onderwerp (soms te zien aan één onderschrift dat alle foto's begeleid). In zo'n geval de drie foto's bij elkaar opmeten en invoeren als losse afbeelding. Bij het subformulier afbeeldingen kunnen de afbeeldingen afzonderlijk ingevoerd worden. N.B. Bij het opmeten wordt het eventuele onderschrift meegerekend.
	18. Moppen, spreuken, puzzels, weetjes	Dit genre krijgt altijd 'Geen onderwerp'

## Onderwerp

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Onderwerp	1. Politiek	Berichten over regering, oppositie, belangengroepen, politieke discussies, beleidsnota's. Ook nationale discussies over internationale zaken. Bv. Akkorderen Europese grondwet <b>Niet:</b> berichten met betrekking tot de relaties tussen naties (2). <b>Niet:</b> discussies over sociaal-economische zaken (3).
	2. Internationale betrekkingen	Berichten over internationale verhoudingen in ruime zin. Bijv.: oorlogen, hulpverlening, Eur.Parlement, verdragen, int.tribunalen <b>Niet:</b> persoonlijke verhalen, bijv. spontane hulpverleners aan Tsunamislachtoffers (human interest).



Onderwerp	3. Sociaal-economisch	Berichten over sociaal-economische ontwikkelingen met betrekking tot (de verhoudingen tussen) groepen mensen in de samenleving. Bijv.: arbeidsconflicten, stakingen, verzorgingsstaat (pensioen etc), integratie
	4. Economie en handel	Economische of handelsberichten. Cijfermatige overzichten (bijv. de beurskoersen) krijgen als genre 'service' en worden op die manier onderscheiden van andere berichten.
	5. Ongelukken, branden, natuurrampen	Berichten die in hoofdzaak over de gebeurtenissen zelf gaan. <b>Niet:</b> analyses van de eventuele verantwoordelijken en/of (sociaal)-economische gevolgen (3) en (1).
	6. Criminaliteit	Inclusief terrorisme, inclusief rechtszaken. Ook in geval van nog niet bewezen verdenkingen of aanklachten. <b>Niet:</b> bredere analyse, differentiatie naar sociale of etnische groepen (3).
	7. Sport	<b>Niet:</b> berichten over aanverwant supportersgeweld (6). <b>Niet:</b> nationale economische impulsen als gevolg van de organisatie van een sportevenement (4).
	8. Natuur, milieu, klimaat	<b>Niet:</b> de economische consequenties en politieke discussies rond deze onderwerpen (4) en (1).
	9. Onderwijs	Berichten over de inhoud van het onderwijs zelf, het onderwijssysteem, het onderwijsbeleid. <b>Niet:</b> discussies over arbeidsvoorwaarden en of discussies met betrekking tot politieke besluitvorming over onderwijszaken (3) en (1).
	10. Wetenschap en techniek	Berichten over onderzoek, uitvindingen en technische vernieuwingen <b>N.B.</b> In de negentiende eeuw ook onderwerpen als magnetisme, spiritisme, frenologie etc. Ook fundamenteel (in tegenstelling tot toegepast) medisch onderzoek valt hieronder; bv. stamcelonderzoek <b>Niet:</b> als in hoofdzaak gaat over de politieke en economische consequenties (1) en (4).
	11. Gezondheid	Berichten over ziekenhuizen, ziektes, epidemieën, toegepast medisch onderzoek <b>Niet:</b> fundamenteel medisch onderzoek (10).
	12. Levensbeschouwing	Religie en spiritualiteit, breder dan alleen de filosofische kant; ook nieuws over de kerk, religieuze bijeenkomsten, preken. <b>Niet:</b> politieke discussies over de plaats van religie (1) of integratieproblemen van religieuze minderheden (3).
	13. Kunst en cultuur	Berichten over zowel 'hoge' als 'lage' kunstzinnige en culturele productie Bijv.: de poëzie van Lucebert, maar ook het levenslied van Frans Bauer. Ook feestdagen die niet met het koningshuis te maken hebben (17). <b>Niet:</b> Berichten over kunstbeleid of -subsidies(1) of (4).

Onderwerp	14. (Multi)Media	Berichten over rol en positie van de media. Televisiegids (met als genre: service). Overzichten van de inhoud van tijdschriften (genre: overzicht) <b>Niet:</b> politieke discussies over het mediabestel en subsidie (1).
	15. Human interest	Alles met betrekking tot de privésfeer (waarvan de afbakening historisch veranderlijk is) van al dan niet bekende personen.
	16. Lifestyle	Algemene berichten met betrekking tot wonen, mode, culinaire zaken, reizen, etc. <b>Niet:</b> met betrekking tot een specifieke persoon (15)
	17. Koningshuis	Ook vorstenhuizen in het buitenland. <b>Niet:</b> politieke discussies rond het bestaansrecht van het koningshuis (1).
	18. Geschiedenis	Berichten over op zichzelf staande gebeurtenissen in het verleden.
	19. Landbouw, veeteelt, visserij	Berichten over landbouw, veeteelt, visserij <b>Niet:</b> beschouwingen vanuit (sociaal-)economisch perspectief (3).
	20. Scheepvaart	Cijfermatige informatie over aankomst en vertrek van schepen. <b>Niet:</b> berichten over scheepvaart vanuit economisch en technisch-wetenschappelijk perspectief (4) en (10).
	21. Weer	Weerbericht en informatie over rivieren. Afhankelijk van de besproken landen wordt de aard van het bericht nationaal of internationaal <b>Niet:</b> Discussies over het weer in klimatologisch perspectief (8).
	22. Benoemingen; persoonlijk	Overlijdensberichten (niet de overlijdensadvertenties zoals we die nu kennen, dat zijn betaalde advertenties), promoties, benoemingen geestelijken, politici. Ook lijsten van mensen die geslaagd zijn voor examens etc. De benoeming moet definitief zijn. <b>N.B.</b> Het gaat hier om een pragmatische categorie, die alleen gebruikt wordt bij een reeks van korte benoemingsberichten (genre Service).
	23. Gemengde inhoud	Kan eigenlijk alleen voorkomen bij een overzicht met een potpourri van verschillende onderwerpen.
	24. Geen onderwerp	Bij sommige serviceberichten zoals inhoudsopgave of verwijzingen naar artikelen, bij fictie en sommige cartoons.

**Interview**

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Naam auteur	Achternaam, Voornaam	Opschrijven in Opmerkingenveld
Naam geïnterviewde(n)	Achternaam, Voornaam	Opschrijven in Opmerkingenveld. NB De geïnterviewde(n) is/zijn ook bron(nen)
Zelfclassificatie	Ja	Er staat bij het artikel aangegeven dat het om een interview gaat. Signaalwoorden: In alle talen: interview, conversation. Daarnaast in het Nederlands: gesprek, vraaggesprek, onderhoud, bezoek. In het Frans: entretien, entrevue, interrogatoire, visite. In het Engels: (private/personal) talk(s), interrogation.
	Nee	Indien er niets is aangegeven
Vorm interview	Vraag-antwoord	Afwisseling vraag/antwoord. Mag met inleiding/afsluiting. Mag met tussenstukken in de tekst (bijv. scenische beschrijvingen of biografische gegevens), dan wel aangegeven in het commentaarvak.
	Straight quote	Geconstrueerde monoloog zonder vragen. <b>NB:</b> het stuk hoeft zeker niet in zijn geheel te bestaan uit een citaat. Er kan bijvoorbeeld een lange introductie aan vooraf gaan of tussenstukken ingevoegd worden, waardoor uiteindelijk maar een klein deel van het stuk echt 'straight quote' is.
	Mengvorm	Als er wel vragen in het interview verwerkt zijn, maar het niet helemaal het vraag-antwoord format volgt.
Focus interview	Persoon	Het gaat in het interview om de geïnterviewde zelf. <b>NB:</b> ook een interview over eigen werk en totstandkoming daar van (bij kunstenaars) valt onder deze categorie.
	Issue	Het interview gaat over een bepaald onderwerp of thema.
Aandacht privéleven	Ja	Privéleven is: gezin, thuissituatie, vrijetijdsbesteding, etc.
	Nee	
Directe quotes in kop	Ja	Signaal: aanhalingstekens in de kop.
	Nee	

**Reportage**

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Naam auteur	Achternaam, Voornaam	Zie: tabel Auteur
Naam bron(nen)	Achternaam, Voornaam	Zie: tabel Bron
Zelfclassificatie	Ja	Indien er bij aangegeven staat dat het om een reportage gaat. Dit kan enkel via het woord 'reportage' (dit geldt voor alledrie de landen).
	Nee	Alle andere gevallen
Vorm reportage	Registrerende reportage	<b>Basisvorm</b> waarbij uit de tekst blijkt dat de auteur de gebeurtenis enkel gade heeft geslagen zonder er bij betrokken te zijn geweest; passieve waarneming.
	Participerende reportage	<b>Basisvorm</b> waarbij uit de tekst blijkt dat de auteur zelf betrokken was bij de handeling; actieve deelname om iets zelf te kunnen ervaren.

Vorm reportage	Reconstructie	<b>Basisvorm</b> waarbij duidelijk wordt dat een gebeurtenis gereconstrueerd wordt, maar waar deze gebeurtenis zo wordt weergegeven dat er ook een representatie van de ervaring van de gebeurtenis wordt weergegeven. Uit de tekst wordt duidelijk dat de auteur de gebeurtenis niet zelf meegemaakt heeft.
	Reisreportage	Registrerende en/of participerende reportage waarbij de auteur verslag doet van een door hem gemaakte reis, waarbij de representatie van de reiservaring op de voorgrond staat.
	Portretterende reportage	Registrerende reportage waarbij de auteur één persoon volgt en zijn doen en laten beschrijft op een manier die ook de ervaring van dat doen en laten overdraagt op de lezer. De lezer kan invoelen hoe het is om in de schoenen van de geportretteerde staan.
	Mengvorm	Bevat elementen van tenminste twee van de drie basisvormen.
Ik-verteller	Ja	Er moet een aanduiding instaan als 'ik', 'mij', 'me' of bij uitzonderingen 'wij', 'we' of 'ons' als het gaat om een schrijvend duo of de aanduiding of verteller en lezer samen slaat.
	Nee	In alle andere gevallen.
Chronologisch verhaal	Ja	Het verhaal loopt van begin tot eind, maar kan stil gezet worden voor algemene achtergrondinformatie. In zo'n geval gaat het om een 'pauze' in het verhaal die de chronologie niet verbreekt.
	Nee	In het geval van flashbacks, begin in media res, als de uitkomst van het verhaal in het begin duidelijk wordt gemaakt.
Verteltijd	Tegenwoordige tijd	Het verhaal staat consequent in de tegenwoordige tijd. Alleen de 'pauzes' kunnen hier een uitzondering op vormen.
	Verleden tijd	Het verhaal staat consequent in de verleden tijd. Alleen de 'pauzes' kunnen hier een uitzondering op vormen.
	Mengvorm	De auteur wisselt tussen verleden en tegenwoordige tijd.
Gedachteweergave van personages	Ja	De verteller geeft de gedachten van andere personages weer.
	Nee	

## Auteur

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Soort auteur	Redactielid Anoniem redactielid	Als er staat: van onze redactie, van onze medewerker etc. NB: Alleen als expliciet duidelijk is dat het om een redacteur gaat. Anders open laten. Anoniem als geen naam, initialen of pseudoniem wordt vermeld.
	Correspondent Anoniem correspondent	Als er staat: van onze correspondent. Wij maken geen onderscheid tussen binnenland en buitenland. Anoniem als geen naam, initialen of pseudoniem wordt vermeld.

Soort auteur	Persbureau	Als er een persbureau vermeld staat. Bijvoorbeeld (ANP) of (Reuters) achter een kort nieuwsberichtje. <b>NB:</b> als voorafgaand aan het bericht ook een ander type auteur staat vermeld, krijgt die vermelding voorrang.
	Naam	Als er alleen een naam, initialen of pseudoniem wordt vermeld. <b>Niet:</b> redacteur of correspondent
	Andere media	Als het duidelijk is dat het artikel direct en woordelijk overgenomen is uit een ander tijdschrift of dagblad. Bijv. 'De daily mirror schreef gisteren: ....' <b>Niet:</b> bij korte citaten uit andere media (dan media als bron invoeren)
	Niet genoemd	Er staat niks aangegeven bij het artikel over wie de auteur is.

**Bron**

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Soort bronnen	Politicus	Iemand die deel uitmaakt van ons politieke bestel, zowel uitvoerend (regering) als oppositie. Bijv. minister, Kamerlid, burgemeester, wethouder, gedeputeerde, raadslid, maar ook als er een hele partij aan het woord komt ("De PvdA is van mening...") <b>Niet:</b> hoge ambtenaren (bijv. president centrale bank), voorzitters overlegorganen (VNO-NCW, vakbonden, etc.)
	Lobbyist	Iemand die de politieke en/of publieke opinie probeert te beïnvloeden namens een belangengroep. Bijv. actievoerders van Greenpeace, een professionele lobbyist uit de autobranche, het buurtcomité etc.
	Manager/Uitvoerend professional	Iemand die aangehaald wordt in relatie tot de concrete uitvoering van zijn beroep. Ook personen die vroeger een bepaald beroep uitoefenden (bv. sporters die hun carrière afgesloten hebben) vallen hieronder. <b>Niet:</b> Bronnen die vanwege hun beroepsachtergrond of specifieke kennis hun mening geven over andere gebeurtenissen of meer algemene ontwikkelingen (Expert)
	Expert	Iemand die vanwege zijn specifieke kennis van zaken aan het woord komt. Bijvoorbeeld: een economieprofessor over de kredietcrisis Bijv. niet: een economieprofessor over zijn directe werk als docent aan de universiteit (Uitvoerend professional).
	Media	Als een bepaalde media-instelling aan het woord komt (De BBC ging daar tegen in en stelde het volgende: "....."). Ook als iets uit een ander medium (bijv. krant, tv) afkomstig is. Voorbeelden: "In de Volkskrant van gisteren stond..." of "Netwerk onthulde afgelopen dinsdag..."
	Cultureel producent	Een uitvoerend artiest. Bijv. Lucebert of Frans Bauer. <b>Niet:</b> iemand aan de zakelijke of technische kant zoals uitgevers of boekhandelaars.
	Vox populi	Iemand die zijn of haar mening over een bepaald onderwerp geeft zonder specifieke kennis van zaken daarover en zonder er direct bij betrokken te zijn. Bijv. een 'toevallige voorbijganger', reaguurders vallen hier ook onder. Deze worden onder hun pseudoniem ingevoerd of als anonieme vox pop

Soort bronnen	Betrokkene	Betrokkenen, ooggetuigen, familie, kennissen, slachtoffers, daders. NB Bij twijfel krijgt bijv. uitvoerend professional, cultureel producent etc. de voorkeur.
	Overig	Als de bron(nen) niet worden vermeld, maar expliciet als anoniem op worden gevoerd. Of als een bron die niet in bovenstaande indeling past. In dit laatste geval (dat zoveel mogelijk vermeden moet worden) wordt het keuzeprobleem kort omschreven in het opmerkingenvak.
Woordvoerder	Ja	Indien het een woordvoerder is. <b>Niet:</b> Een politicus die verantwoordelijk is voor een bepaald thema wordt ook nog wel eens woordvoerder genoemd (bv. cultuurwoordvoerder van het CDA). Het gaat hierbij om een politicus, niet om een woordvoerder zoals die in onze definitie beschreven staat.
	Nee	

## Afbeelding

Variabele	Keuzeopties/format	Toelichting
Aard van de afbeelding	Nieuwsfoto	Foto waarbij het nieuwswaardige feit of de nieuwswaardige handeling centraal staat. Ook actiefoto van een sport. Ook nieuwsfoto uit verleden die wordt herdrukt.
	Nieuwsafbeelding	Zie boven, geen foto, maar tekening/schets etc.
	Portretfoto	Foto waarbij een persoon centraal staat. Een dier kan eventueel ook, een gebouw niet (dan -> sfeerfoto) NB: onderscheid kan bij sporters soms moeilijk zijn.
	Portretafbeelding	Zie boven, geen foto.
	Sfeerfoto	Foto waarbij de omgeving, de 'setting', van de gebeurtenis centraal staat. De esthetische waarde is belangrijker dan de nieuwswaarde.
	Sfeerafbeelding	Zie boven, geen foto.
	Spotprent/cartoon	Satirische afbeelding
	Grafiek/tabel/schematische afbeelding	Informatieve, schematische afbeelding. Ook schaakbord bij stuk over schaken. Niet kruiswoordpuzzel (dat helemaal niet als plaatje coderen).
	Logo	Standaard afbeelding waaraan een bepaalde terugkerend artikel aan te herkennen is
	Reproductie	Reproductie van een bestaand kunstwerk. Niet: foto uit een film, dan sfeerfoto.
Oppervlakte afbeelding	cm <sup>2</sup>	Op één cijfer achter de komma. Bij losse afbeelding de oppervlakte ook daar nog invoeren, maar dan zonder het onderschrift mee te rekenen.

**Specifieke afspraken**

Probleem	Afspraak
Bronnen	
Wanneer is iets een bron?	<p>Als iemand in de tekst aan het woord wordt gelaten, al dan niet letterlijk. Dat mag ook via andere media zijn. Bij "Harry Nak zei in de Volkskrant ..." mag je Harry Nak als bron noemen. Een bron kan ook een instantie, een bedrijf, een politieke partij, etc. zijn.</p> <p>Aanvulling: ook bij nieuws dat uit een andere krant/tijdschrift/etc. afkomstig is, voeren we een bron in (media). Je zou de bron dan kunnen beschouwen als anonieme journalist. Het is nl. interessant om te zien in welke mate journalisten elkaar als bron gebruiken.</p> <p><b>Uitzondering:</b> bij bijv. recensies kan iemand uit een boek geciteerd worden. In dit geval gaat het om een tekst die al beschikbaar was, en is het geen bron.</p>
Overzicht	<p>Een overzicht kan bestaan uit verschillende nieuwtjes uit het buitenland of binnenland, mits het stuk een eenheid vormt en de verschillende feiten (losjes) geïntegreerd worden in één artikel.</p> <p>Een andere variant is een opsomming van citaten over een bepaald onderwerp.</p>
Interview	<p>Bij een interview moet altijd in het veld "Opmerkingen" naam en evt. omschrijving van interviewer, geïnterviewde worden genoteerd.</p> <p>Voorbeeld: Interviewer: Noel Howard, correspondent. Geïnterviewde: Vladimir Poetin, president van Rusland.</p> <p>Vijf experts bevraagd over een stelling is ook een interview. Hoeft dus niet per sé met 1 persoon te zijn.</p>
Rechtszaken	<p>Als er een verdachte of veroordeelde persoon of instantie is, valt het onder criminaliteit. Andere gevallen worden ingedeeld naar onderwerp.</p>
Artikel binnen een artikel	<p>Als er binnen een artikel een apart kadertje is opgenomen met achtergrondinformatie, dan valt dit onder het hele artikel en wordt niet apart ingevoerd. Het wordt wel even genoteerd in het opmerkingenveld.</p>
Losse afbeeldingen	<p>De oppervlakte van losse afbeeldingen wordt twee keer ingevoerd, dus ook nog een keer in het subformulier 'afbeeldingen'.</p>
Persbureau & andere media	<p>Als een stuk direct is overgenomen van een persbureau of uit een ander tijdschrift of dagblad, dan wordt dat persbureau of blad opgevoerd als auteur. Deze artikelen zijn te herkennen aan de naam van het persbureau onder het artikel of een begin als 'De daily mirror schreef eergisteren: .....'</p>
Contactinformatie van een krant	<p>Stukken waarin informatie wordt gegeven hoe de lezer met krant in contact kan komen, vallen onder service en krijgen 'Geen onderwerp'.</p>
Benoemingen in nieuwsbericht	<p>Als een nieuwsbericht gaat over de benoeming van een persoon, is het onderwerp niet 'benoemingen, etc.'; dat is alleen bij serviceberichten (aankondigingen in de krant). Het onderwerp bij een benoeming hangt af van het beroep van de benoemde; predikant wordt 'religie, politicus wordt 'politiek', etc.</p>
Recensie nationaal / internationaal	<p>Recensies van bijv. een Nederl. vertaling van een Engels boek zijn nationaal, want het is bedoeld voor de nationale markt.</p>
Wanneer is iets een advertentie?	<p>Als ervoor betaald is. Vaak zijn aankondigingen van theatertijden ook advertenties. In oudere, met name Franse, kranten staat regelmatig 'sluikreclame' die eruit ziet als nieuwsbericht - daar is wel voor betaald, dus rekenen als advertentie.</p>

# Appendix II

## Chapter I

### p.11

Wie nieuws objectiveert, maakt het veel moeilijker betrokkenheid te voelen bij waar dat nieuws over gaat. Door de verteller uit het verhaal te slopen, en daarmee degene die betrokkenheid op de wereld tot stand kan brengen, creëer je een afstand tussen het publiek en de wereld. Juist om die reden neemt De Correspondent afscheid van dat aloude objectiviteitsideaal. Niet alleen omdat objectiviteit altijd in zekere zin *geveinsd* is (dat de subjectieve keuzes en afwegingen die aan ieder verhaal voorafgaan impliciet blijven, wil niet zeggen dat ze er niet zijn), maar vooral ook omdat De Correspondent die kloof tussen publiek en wereld (en publiek en journalist) wil dichten. Zodra je het idee laat varen dat je de wereld kan laten zien 'zoals ze is', wordt de doelstelling van de journalistiek opeens een heel andere, namelijk: de wereld laten zien 'zodat je erom gaat geven'.<sup>1</sup>

## Chapter V

### p.132

Une façon de satisfaire mon vice [...] le voyage pour le voyage, le nouveau pour le nouveau, même si le pays qu'on verra demain ne vaut pas celui de la veille.<sup>2</sup>

### p.136

All of that, because a little boy of the innkeeper told the town clerk:

- "There are two spies in our inn."
- "How do you know they are spies?"
- "Because they talk so funny."<sup>3</sup>

### p.137

Bij Lixhe lag een zwarte pontonbrug over de rivier. Sinds den namiddag stijgen weer zware rookwolken omhoog aan den kant van Berneau. Belgische soldaten zijn vluchtend over de grens gekomen bij Eysden. Het luiker neerderfort is tot zwijgen gebracht. Een Zeppelin vloog er over en wierp er bommen op.<sup>4</sup>

### p.138

Ils ont bombardé Reims et nous avons vu cela!<sup>5</sup>

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1 Rob Wijnberg, "Waarom een verhaal niet zonder verteller kan," *De Correspondent*, April 13, 2013 (accessed last on June 14, 2013).  
 2 Cited in Redfern, W. (2004). 14 [Originally cited in Francis Lacassin, "Au pays des grands reporters, Albert Londres," *Gringoire*, 19 July (1929)]  
 3 Jean Louis Pisuise, "De kriegsbedrijven te land," *De Telegraaf*, August 18, 1914.  
 4 Johan Luger, "Een tocht door het Luiksche," *De Telegraaf*, August 7, 1914.  
 5 Albert Londres, "Ils bombardent Reims....," in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris: Arléa, 2007), 28.



**p.139**

Uit de verte klinkt nog geschutvuur, maar het is heel ver weg. Men vraagt en gist. Spreekt van een vernieuwde wapenstilstand. En dan opeens komt het bericht. De Duitschers trekken door de stad. [...]

En het is waar. Als ik op de Place du Théâtre kom, vind ik er Duitse grenadiers keurig in khaki-uniformen, óók de helmen met een overtrek in dezelfde kleur.<sup>6</sup>

Ze zagen er diep rampzalig uit en vooral de civilist trok een gezicht of hij met zijn gedachte al reeds niet meer verwijlde bij zijn geteisterde vaderlandje, maar zich het lot herinnerde van zijn voorgangers, die nu al dagen verstijfd en kil in de boomgaarden en greppels liggen.<sup>7</sup>

**p.140**

[V]oor ons blijft het in deze dagen niets anders dan verkennen, onderzoeken, lijntjes leggen om, als de groote dag dáár is, op elk punt zijn connecties te hebben. Daarvoor zijn we meestal twintig uur van 'n etmaal in 't touw, soms te voet, urenlang te fiets en - als de hemel ons gunstig is - nu en dan eens in 'n automobiel. [...]

En 't resultaat van dit alles? Voor den lezer betrekkelijk zóó weinig, dat men er - zooals ik nu - geen telegram aan durf te spenderen.<sup>8</sup>

On ne donne plus de billets pour Hazebrouck, on peut, malgré toutes les seductions, trouver voiture qui vous y conduise, c'est l'instant de réveiller en nous notre instinct de chemineau: nous irons à pied. Il s'est passé quelque chose à Hazebrouck, nous ne savons pas quoi, car on raconte tout. Cet homme qui en vient dit que les Allemands sont dans la ville, cet autre qui la quitte les a vus s'enfuir, ils étaient cent, ils étaient mille, ils sont venus ici, ils sont par là; [...]

Un seul point est clair: il s'est passé quelque chose à Hazebrouck.<sup>9</sup>

**p.141**

Depuis deux jours, Dieu s'en mêle. Stimulé par ses creatures, il a sorti son arsenal: l'éclair, le tonnerre, la pluie, le grêlon. En temps régulier, il y aurait de quoi se voir tomber dans toutes les maladies. C'est la guerre. On a froid, mais on ne met pas de complaisance à le sentir. On a froid, on est trempé, mais comme si l'on ne devait pas avoir chaud, comme si l'on ne devait pas être au sec. C'est bien.

Les grêlons craquent sous la semelle. C'est un petit jeu. Toujours un moment de soustrait aux grande vagues d'émotion qui vous present. Chaque fois, en approchant du combat, votre être intérieur se renouvelle ainsi. Il y a réellement à un certain endroit des champs, une barrière invisible, où d'un côté l'on respire le *commun* et de l'autre, le *choisi*. L'âme change d'enveloppement: vous passez d'une vie dans la vie.<sup>10</sup>

Ik werd toen dadelijk door burgerwachten omringd, die mij naar het eerste perron brachten en naar een zeer barschen adjudant van de gendarmerie en 'n zeer zenuwachtig luitenantje van de burgerwacht leidden. Toen bleek mij al gauw, dat mijn veldkijker voor een fotografietoestel was aangezien, hetgeen de reden van mijn arrestatie was geworden. Mijn papieren, volkomen in orde

<sup>6</sup> Jean Louis Pisuise, "In Luik gedurende de belegering," *De Telegraaf*, August 9, 1914.

<sup>7</sup> Johan Luger, "De krijgsbedrijven te land," *De Telegraaf*, August 11, 1914.

<sup>8</sup> Jean Louis Pisuise, "De krijgsbedrijven te land," *De Telegraaf*, August 18, 1914.

<sup>9</sup> Londres, Albert (2007/1914). 'Une ville sous le coup'. In: *Câbles et reportages*. 34

<sup>10</sup> Londres, Albert (2007/1914). 'Une voix d'homme au milieu des canons'. In: *Câbles et reportages*. 52

en zelfs in vertrouwenwekkendheid toegenomen door een coupe-file, mij door den burgemeester van Brussel verstrekt, werden nagekeken, maar bleken niet voldoende mijn onschuldig métier van courantenman afdoende vast te stellen.<sup>11</sup>

**p.142**

En hij keek me in m'n mond, in m'n ooren, in m'n neusgaten, tusschen m'n teenen... enfin, overal waar hij maar in kijken kon en constateerde toen, wat ik hem ook zonder al die onsmakelijke operaties wel had kunnen vertellen: "Rien du tout".<sup>12</sup>

Au-dessus de Dunkerque, quatre avions ennemis passaient. Le ciel était radieusement bleu. De même, les plus beaux fronts portent souvent les pensées les plus noires.

L'un sur l'autre, d'autres coups éclatent, le monde court. Encore d'autres coups. Où? On court. La ville si vide dans tous les sens, les quatre avions tournent sur les toits. Un monsieur planté sur sa porte regardait le ciel à travers ses jumelles. Un coup lui arrache le bras. À chaque éclatement, la tête, guidée par l'oreille, va aux quatre coins de la ville. Des petites filles pleurent très fort dans la rue. On les engouffre dans un couloir. Les balles de fusil rentrent dans l'air comme dans du feutre. C'est un bruit mat. Encore des coups. On ne les a pas dénombrés, l'esprit n'est pas au calcul. Ils semblent trois fois plus nombreux. Les bombes tombent. [...] Les éclatement cessent. Les avions ne disparaissent pas. Midi.<sup>13</sup>

**p.143**

Reims nous apparut à quinze kilomètres. La cathédrale profilait la majesté de ses lignes et chantait dans le fond de la plaine son poème de pierres. Nous ne quittâmes plus des yeux.<sup>14</sup>

**p.144**

Les obusiers crachent sur la cite. Des ballons de fume s'élèvent de tous les coins. Sur un fond rouge et mouvant comme sur une tenture que l'on secoue, la cathédrale, étirant ses lignes vers le ciel, prie ardemment. Elle recommande son âme à Dieu.<sup>15</sup>

Ce n'est plus elle, ce n'est que son apparence.

C'est un soldat que l'on aurait jugé de loin sur sa silhouette toujours haute mais qui, une fois approché, ouvrant sa capote, vous montrerait sa poitrine déchirée.<sup>16</sup>

The cathedral of Rheims is for instance also described as "pantelante" and as "n'est plus qu'une plaie."<sup>17</sup>

**p.145**

La marée est basse. Comme nous, un autre homme est sur le sable. Nous le voyons de loin, le dos plié, touchant des choses. Pourquoi les mieux prédestinés à la solitude sont-ils, en ces temps, conduits instinctivement vers la compagnie? Est-ce parce que toute âme dans cette region peut être rendue à l'instant et qu'il faut bien la saluer auparavant?

<sup>11</sup> Jean Louis Pisuise, "Spionnenvrees," *De Telegraaf*, August 8, 1914.

<sup>12</sup> Pisuise, "Spionnenvrees."

<sup>13</sup> Albert Londres, "De l'angoisse sur deux villes," in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, Arléa, 2007), 69-70.

<sup>14</sup> Londres, "Ils bombardent Reims..." 28-29.

<sup>15</sup> Londres, "Ils bombardent Reims..." 28-29.

<sup>16</sup> Albert Londres, "L'agonie de la basilique," in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, Arléa, 2007), 31.

<sup>17</sup> Londres, "L'agonie de la basilique," 31-32.

En attendant le retour des navires que l'on voyait remis en file, nous allâmes vers cet homme. Il plongeait souvent son bras dans un broc, en ramenait une matière que, courbé, avançant ses jambes de côté, il étalait au ras de l'eau. Il leva la tête plusieurs fois pour nous regarder venir, mais sans cesser de puiser ni d'étendre. Ses mains étaient dégouttantes de rouge. Ce broc était un broc de sang moitié caillé. Il en faisait de grandes larmes qu'il accrochait à des hameçons en vue de la marée haute. Un broc de sang! C'était pour rester deux jours sans en voir qu'ici nous étions venu. Nous ne sommes pas une demoiselle. Nous savons sangler nos sentiments qui s'échappent. Mais il nous faut un temps pour combler le vide de ceux que la pitié nous arrache. C'est ce temps que nous venions chercher. Un broc de sang! Tu ne travailles donc qu'avec tes mains, pêcheur?<sup>18</sup>

Dat is wel de meeste stekelige hoon - het land is door den oorlog overvallen in oogsttijd, is getroffen in zijn onmiddellijk bestaan. De paarden vertrappen de haver en rogge - de koebeesten lopen klagend in de kleine weiden bij de boerenhuizen, maar de huizen zijn leeg en de melkers in het leger of gefusilleerd in de greppels. Het is of men het land in zijn bloei heeft willen stuiten door het levende te vernielen, maar overal richt het vertrapte koren zich weer op en alleen, die het zaaide richt zich nimmer meer op. Maar het zwijgen heerscht overal.

[...]

En voor we het dorp binnenreden lagen daar langs den grooten weg in de geulen de rijen dooden, even zwijgend als het landschap, de stille, bleke gezichten in het zonlicht. [...] De landbouwers van de dorpen daar filosofeerden misschien over den mooien zomer van '14, toen de dood er zijn oogst kwam binnenhalen.<sup>19</sup>

#### p.146

Toen ik dan "in m'n lorgnetje en m'n trouwring" stond, kwam een heertje, dat best een dokter kon zijn, mij overal bekijken, ja zelfs bekloppen... alsof ik documenten onder mijn huid zou hebben verstopt!<sup>20</sup>

Reims! Tu n'est plus seule: Arras est un décombre.<sup>21</sup>

### Chapter VII

#### p.183

Men herinnert zich ook nog zijn tweede reeks brieven, levendig vertellend van wat de schrijver had beleefd en waargenomen, vol bijzonderheden die verklaarden hoe hij tot zijn indrukken was gekomen, journalistiek werk van de goede soort.<sup>22</sup>

#### p.187

Zoo'n "hekwieler" is een platboomd vaartuigje - de "Negara" is er een van nog geen 74 ton netto - dat wordt voortbewogen door één groot rad aan de achterzijde van het scheepje (de achterzijde van een schip is het "hek"). Het kan dientengevolge in zeer ondiepe en nauwe wateren varen (de "Negara" heeft maar een meter diepgang), en het kan bovendien, op de breede Barito, twee groote laadprauwen meenemen langs zij.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Albert Londres, "Six vaisseaux vus du ravage", in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris: Arléa, 2007), 56.

<sup>19</sup> Johan Luger, "Een week op de Belgische grens II," *De Telegraaf*, August 17, 1914.

<sup>20</sup> Pisuise, "Spionnenvrees," *De Telegraaf*, August 8, 1914.

<sup>21</sup> Albert Londres, "Arras aussi!," in *Câbles et reportages*, ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris: Arléa, 2007), 36.

<sup>22</sup> "De Groote Oost". Reisbrieven van C.K. Elout, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, July 25, 1930.

<sup>23</sup> C. K. Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 29, 1929.

**p.188**

Maar de *gelak manis* - de Maleische uitdrukking past voortreffelijk op het sluw-zoete van dezen glimlach - grijnst weer over het gezicht van Willem Kansil en hij antwoordt fluweelig: "Toch liever Hollandsch; ik kan mij beter uitdrukken". (Men gelieve, om deze ongeloofelijke geurmakerij te genieten, deze woorden goed op z'n Indisch uit te spreken.)<sup>24</sup>

**p.189**

Etudiant à l'école supérieure de commerce, il ne portait pas, comme ses camarades annamites, son costume national, mais un elegant veston avec pochette assortie à une cravate du goût le plus sûr. Long et mince, des traits d'une finesse presque féminine, éclairé par un sourire timide, il parlait d'une voix très douce, frémissante d'une secrète ardeur[.]<sup>25</sup>

**p.190-191**

We liggen, met de "Donggala", een K.P.M.ertje [A mail ship from the *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*] van 300 ton, vóór de wereldvisshershaven Bagan Si-Api-Api en zullen straks even aan land gaan kijken. [...] [E]erst echter diende ik het nog even te hebben over wat tegenwoordig zelfs de aandacht van den Volkenbond trekt: de arbeidstoestanden op Sumatra's Oostkust en de quaestie der "poenale sanctie". De omgeving is hier, op het dekje (een "salon" bestaat er niet, zelfs geen "kajuit", maar waartoe zouden ze dienen in de warmte?) slechts matig geschikt voor schrijfwerk: de lier van het voorluik roffelt telkens, de bootkoelies kakelen en schreeuwen en, 't ergste van al, ergens op het schip zingt iemand krachtig: "Sonja, Sonja, waarom jou niet smile?" Maar 't is lekker frisch hier en aan de trassi-geuren van Bagan Si Api heeft, sinds eenige dagen, het laadruim mij al geheel gewend gemaakt. Vooruit dus maar!<sup>26</sup>

**p.191**

"Sonja, Sonjaaaa! Waarom jou niet smile?" Ja Sonja, ik wou dat je 't maar deed; dan was dat gezang misschien uit. Terug naar de P.S.! [Penal Sanctions, FH]"<sup>27</sup>

**p.192**

Het zal, uit het voorafgaande, voor iedereen, die niet opzettelijk den feitelijken toestand wil miskennen, duidelijk zijn geworden dat van "afschaffen" der P.S. [penal sanctions, FH] in afzienbaren tijd geen sprake kan zijn wanneer men de Europeesche cultures ter Oostkust niet totaal wil vernielen. Ik zeg "afzienbaar" maar onafzienbaar" is misschien juist, want zelfs indien de autochtone bevolking talrijk genoeg zal zijn geworden om, gelijk op Java, de noodige arbeidskrachten te leveren, dan zou ze toch van aard moeten veranderen, om dat ook werkelijk te doen. Noch de Bataks noch de Kustmaleiers hebben lust in geregelheden, vasten loonarbeid; ze luieren liever op een minimum-bestaan dat ze met een klein weinigje arbeid [...] zich kunnen verwerven.<sup>28</sup>

**p.193**

Maintenant, voulez-vous comparer des chiffres? Cette société a connu et connaît encore un propriété inouïe. [...] La journée de travail est, en principe, de dix heures, mais, en fait, des escouades d'ouvriers,

<sup>24</sup> C.K. Elout, "De les van Sangir. II. De rechtbank op Siaoë," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 22, 1929.

<sup>25</sup> Viollis, "Les poulx accéléré de la Chine.

<sup>26</sup> C.K. Elout, "Werken in Deli," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, March 27, 1929.

<sup>27</sup> Elout, "Werken in Deli.

<sup>28</sup> Elout, "Werken in Deli."

sous la direction de contremaîtres, devant fournir certaines quantités de charbon, travaillent tant que leur tâche n'est pas terminée; [...]enfin, point d'habitations pour les indigènes: de misérables paillotes sont louées aux contremaîtres recruteurs qui les sous-louent avec bénéfice aux ouvriers.

Le directeur nous fit visiter un hospital tout neuf et fort bien organisé; il était temps, en effet, qu'on s'occupât quelque peu de la santé et de l'hygiène de cette armée du travail dont les blessures, jusqu'ici, restaient sans traitement[.] [...] [S]es collaborateurs alléguèrent que les conditions du travail étaient suffisantes dans une region où le paysan ne gagne guère plus de 1 fr. 50 par jour.<sup>29</sup>

**p.193**

Je n'ai certes pas la prétention d'avoir tout vu ni tout compris. [...] Mais j'ai conscience d'être restée, sinon dans la vérité, - qui peut se vanter de ne lui voir qu'un seul visage? - tout au moins dans l'impartialité.<sup>30</sup>

**p.196**

Je revois au passage du dernier bac sur la rivière d'Argent coulant au pied de la montagne de malachite, le cortège sous de larges parasols de bois sculpté portés par des jeunes hommes impassibles vêtus de rouge vif, les vieillards en robe bleue devant la porte de la petite pagode en ruines, mains jointes, dos respectueux, murmurant des souhaits de bienvenue, tandis que, gonflant leurs joues, les joueurs de flute lançaient en vrille les aigres sons nasillards dominant le sourd grondement des tam-tams. [...] Je me souviens surtout de celui du grand empereur Minh Mang, qui vivait il y a une centaine d'années.<sup>31</sup>

Daar ben ik weer in het fluweel van Indië. Van Indië's warmte, die zoo lekker dóórdringt tot in het merg van iemand, die net komt uit den langen tunnel van Nederlands winterkilte en lage luchten. En aan Indië's soepelheid, die aan het leven hier meer glimlach geeft dan ginds. Indië heeft mij weer omwikkeld met al zijn fulpen bekingen... en ook met die van zijn tijd geweldige grootsheid. Ik weet dat ik het nog sterker zal te voelen krijgen, want hier op "de Oostkust", ligt er een schitterend en schoon máár Europeesch kuras om het fluweel van het Oosten heen.<sup>32</sup>

Wie in Indië reist met de, m.i. nog altijd onvolprezen, K.P.M., moet op soms vreemde ontschepingen bedacht zijn. [...] Ik heb mij dus hier op eigen gelegenheid, d.w.z. in een smal inlandsch vlerkprauwtje, naar den Heiligen Boom Fiscaal moeten laten pagaaien, hetgeen ik, aangezien ikzelf wél maar mijn barang niet kan zwemmen, pas heb aangedurfd toen de grootste drukte was geluwd en ik een prauwtje voor mij en mijn koffers alléén kon bemachtigen.<sup>33</sup>

**p.197**

Wat de verschijning van dezen man, in de slechte verlichte galerij, nog meer tot die van een argeloozen "wilde" maakte, was de uitdrukking van kinderlijke onnoozelheid die uit zijn open oogen, zijn open mond en heel zijn onbeschreven kinderlijke gezicht sprak. [...] Hij deed, langzaam, een paar schreden op het open veld en bleef daar staan, de rechterhand, waarin die onbegrijpelijke djimat van den blanke zeker nog lag, wat vooruit gestrekt. Ik wuifde, maar ook dat begreep hij niet en nog lang heb ik hem zoo zien staan vóór dat tragische huis. Symbool van volksverval, met die vragende hand en

<sup>29</sup> Andrée Viollis, "Visions rapides d'un Tonkin éblouissant et fantomatique," *Le Petit Parisien*, November 17, 1931.

<sup>30</sup> Andrée Viollis cited in: Boucharenc, *L'écrivain-reporter*, 179-180.

<sup>31</sup> Andrée Viollis, "M. Reynaud est à Hanoï capitale du Tonkin," *Le Petit Parisien*, November 9, 1931.

<sup>32</sup> C.K. Elout, "Vreugden van Deli," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, March 10, 1929.

<sup>33</sup> C.K. Elout, "De Rots van Nederland," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 26, 1929.

dat vragende, onbegrijpende gezicht, uitzierend over het wijde water naar het vreemde blankenschip.<sup>34</sup>

**p.197**

Son Excellence Thioun est un petit homme au visage affable aux yeux brillante d'intelligence sous ses lunettes d'or.<sup>35</sup>

Un seul bâtiment étincelait par ses centaines de fenêtres: la caserne des soldats japonais. "Much Trouble!"

11 heures: je ne dors pas. Esprit tendu, inquiète, je vais parfois jusqu'à ma fenêtre. Il me paraît impossible que rien ne se produise cette nuit. Tout à coup, je sursaute: des detonations retentissent. Ne s'agit-il pas simplement de ces pétards que les Chinois aiment à lancer pour le plaisir d'entendre du bruit? Mais non, c'est bien le crépitement des mitrailleuses. Je m'habille en hate et je cours à un garage voisin où les chauffeurs me connaissent bien. Tout de suite, l'un d'eux comprends où il me faut mener.<sup>36</sup>

**p.198**

Ik heb mijn blikken van de "Barentsz" afgewend, ben weer teruggezakt in mijn linnen dekstoel en heb mij verder gedompeld in 't roerloos leven zonder zorg en zonder wenschen. [...] En nu is het avond. De zeewind is gaan liggen en de bergwind die des nachts van den vulkaan komt glijden, slaapt nog zijn dagdiefslaap. Het wordt zoeler. En stiller. En donkerder. De papegaaien zweven schimmig uit de palmen over naar de paar boomen vóór de baroega en steken, na wat gekibbel over de beste plaats, den kop onder de wiek. In warme, zwarte armen sluit de nacht nu alle dingen op.<sup>37</sup>

**p.199**

Bref de taille, très droit, des épaules carrées de sportif, il [Reynaud, FH] arpente le pont de son pas rapide et volontaire, le bras passé sous celui de sa fille, une jolie et fraîche bachelière qui ouvre sur le vaste monde des yeux et un esprit fort avisés, ou bien assis près de Mme Reynaud, fille du bâtonnier Henri-Robert, qui a su conquérir le bord par sa simplicité et son charme affable.<sup>38</sup>

**p.200**

A la sortie de cet enfer [the coal mines, FH] nous attendait le plus merveilleux paradis. Nous y pénétrâmes sur une canonnière, la *Viguante*, où tout et tous pont, cabines, officiers, matelots, étaient blancs souriants angéliques. [...] Sur un immense tapis marin, toutes les teintes or et vert, en tapis de 400 kilomètres de longueur: imaginez pourtant des milliers d'îles, d'îlets, de rochers et de rocs chevelus; arbustes et lianes se dressent avec les formes les plus inattendues. Au crépuscule, profiles en noir sur le ciel couleur opale, j'avais cru voir un monstreux troupeau d'animaux incongruent mêlés: lions, taureaux, dragons, tortues géantes, qui figés dans des poses incroyables, semblaient s'ébattre fantastiquement.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup> C.K. Elout, "In Dajakland," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 6, 1929.

<sup>35</sup> Andrée Viollis, "Quatre jours d'enchantement," *Le Petit Parisien*, October 28, 1931.

<sup>36</sup> Andrée Viollis, "L'occupation japonaise à Changhai vue par notre envoyée special," *Le Petit Parisien*, January 30, 1932.

<sup>37</sup> C.K. Elout, "Ternataansche idylle," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 30, 1929.

<sup>38</sup> Andrée Viollis, "À bord du "D'Artagnan"," *Le Petit Parisien*, September 23, 1931.

<sup>39</sup> Viollis, "Visions rapides d'un Tonkin éblouissant et fantomatique."

**p.200-201**

En het ondergaan der zon was een grandioos festijn. Wij waren juist, tusschen twee bochten, op een verbreeding van den Barito, een soort van klein meer en recht vooruit stak de zon zich achter een wolkenmassief van zonderling scherp omlijnde, stijf gebalde grijs-en-witte sneeuwigheid. Toen viel de weerglans in het water: zwart met horizontale gouden strepen onder 't Bosch, daarvòór een tooverij van verticale banen, indigo en rozerood, met zoo merkwaardig rechte, horizontale begrenzingen aan den onderkant dat het de spiegeling geleeke van een ontzaglijk sprookjesslot. Nog even later werd dit verzonken kasteel een gansche stad van sneeuwig blauw met, onderaan, een aantal gouden spitsen. Toen sloeg [...] de zon dat alles in een kleurenvaaagsel door elkaar en tooverde banen van rood en zwart in 't water, daarboven ommuurd door 't duisterende Bosch en eindelijk, omhoog, de vastgebalde sneeuwkolos waarachter de zon, aldus gemaskerd, een brand van wijde roode vlammen wegschoot in de ontruste lucht.<sup>40</sup>

**p.201**

Het water springt uit een steilen boschkant naar voren en gudst in een val van schuimende witte schubben omlaag in een cylindrische koker van oerbosch zoodat de donder van de storting een geweldigen weerklank krijgt en men dit brullende witte waterbeest al van heel verre hoort.<sup>41</sup>

Ik heb hier vier en twintig uur in 't Paradijs geleefd. Zij 't dan ook zonder Eva..... maar ook zonder slang. Doch in dit sterke en groote der natuur en van de menschenkinderen die er in thuis zijn, voelde ik mij, als Westerling, wel klein en hulpeloos. En tòch in 't vóórportaal der aardsche zaligheid.<sup>42</sup>

Le soir tombait sur cette nature dont la fougue magnifique n'offre jamais le terrifiant et brutal désordre de la brousse africaine, mais sait accepter la discipline imposé par l'homme et reste souriante comme ses habitants. Et les derniers rayons d'un soleil voilé éclairèrent avec une mystérieuse douceur l'éblouissant jardin où l'agent général des Messageries Maritimes, M. Pascalis, avait aimablement réuni autour des tables à thé la colonie et les missionnaires français.<sup>43</sup>

Des enfants, sur la terrasse d'une école ressemblent à des massifs au printemps: des femmes reviennent des champs, tenant haut des brassées de verdure traversées par le soleil. Partout ce sont des visions d'innocence et de gaité qui évoquent le paradis enfantin de Paul et Virginie.<sup>44</sup>

**p.202**

Le lendemain, dès l'aube, dans un frais paysage des Vosges ou des Pyrénées, longue escalade des montagnes que couronne, à 1.500 mètres, la ville de Dalat, séjour d'été de l'Indochine. Au pied des étendards qui jalonnent la route, autour des arcs de triomphe de verdure se tiennent des groups de fonctionnaires et de notables des villages, en robes de soie noire ou bleue.<sup>45</sup>

Het regent. Het regent in Bandjermasin. In den natten tijd. En het heeft geregend, gisteren en van nacht, den heelen nacht. En het zal regenen. Nog veel, nog heel veel. En hard, donderend hard. [...] En

<sup>40</sup> Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."

<sup>41</sup> Elout, "De Rots van Nederland."

<sup>42</sup> Elout, "Ternataansche idylle,"

<sup>43</sup> Andrée Viollis, "M. Paul Reynaud est arrivé à Singapour," *Le Petit Parisien*, October 5, 1931.

<sup>44</sup> Viollis, "M. Paul Reynaud est arrive à Singapour."

<sup>45</sup> Andrée Viollis, "M. Paul Reynaud poursuivant son enquête visite l'Annam," *Le Petit Parisien*, November 6, 1931.

op alles dondert de regen neer. De Indische regen. In Bandjermasin.<sup>46</sup>

### p.203

Crickets chirp. Fireflies come sparkling over to the lamplight of the pasangrahan [guesthouse, FH]. A dark rapping of oars (no paddles this time) is babbling from the deep. The sea is panting heavily.<sup>47</sup> [The alliteration and assonance is for the most part lost in translation, FH]

The light bouquets that the countless ships raised in the moon and starry night, their cradling reflecting vanes in the black water, the quiet, black trunks, the large, rose gold orange slice of the backwards lying half-moon, the grinding of the oars of a sampan against the wooden tholes, the far-away rolling of a wins, someone calling over the wide water and, enveloping everything, the blurry-wrapping of the pale-bluish night.<sup>48</sup> [The alliteration and assonance is for the most part lost in translation, FH]

### p.204

"Who sailed to Ambon on a summer sea?" .... I don't know anymore, who of our (at that time modern) poets, Verwey or Van Eeden, wrote the melancholic poem that starts with this line. This line stayed with me almost constantly after I had arrived at what was not a "summer sea" at all.<sup>49</sup>

### p.204-205

De Rivier is weer aanmerkelijk nauwer en de hooge wand met oerbosch links, de onberekenbare verte van het oerbosch rechts, zijn onbewegelijke dreigingen. Wat is er aan 't eind van deze eindelooze wentelingen? Huist daar inderdaad het legendarische monster dat de Dajaks beschrijven als een soort van neushoorn die in 't water leeft? Hij zal wel niet bestaan, maar is er niets anders, iets minder materieels en moeilijker te omschrijven, een soort van wezen der Rivier dat, langzaam, in zijn duizend kronkels, mij loom vermurwt en in zich zuigt? Ik heb soms een gevoel alsof ik ingezwolgen word in deze matelooze groene slang en er niet meer uit zal komen. En ik verlang dat ook niet. Ik wensch dat dit zoo voort blijft gaan.<sup>50</sup>

### p.205

Ik vind het goed zoo, raak allengs in monotone stemmingseenheid met de omgeving. Voor mijn part komt er helemaal geen eind aan de Rivier. Mijn jasje draag ik al lang niet meer. Das en boord zwerven ergens in mijn hut. Een groot deel van den dag breng ik trouwens in pyjama door. Dit loome leven lijkt mij wel. [...] En ik laat mij drijven, Borneo in.<sup>51</sup>

"De Rivier is verdwenen. Plotseling afgebroken als een *Unvollendete Symphonie*. Ik vaar er nog op [...] maar het is eenvoudig een waterweg geworden."<sup>52</sup>

<sup>46</sup> C.K. Elout, "Welvaart en water," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 17, 1929.

<sup>47</sup> Elout, "Ternataansche idylle."

<sup>48</sup> C.K. Elout, "Merkwaardigheden van Asahan," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 9, 1929.

<sup>49</sup> C.K. Elout, "Molukkiade," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, June 7, 1929.

<sup>50</sup> Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."

<sup>51</sup> Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."

<sup>52</sup> Elout, "Met de "Negara" door donker Borneo."



## Chapter VIII

### p.243

Na de massa-arbeid is het nu de massa-recreatie, die de menselijke persoonlijkheid belaagt en die zijn eigen activiteit en initiatief, die elke eigen inspanning op geestelijk en cultureel gebied, dreigt te doen plaats maken voor passiviteit en grauwe vervlakking.<sup>53</sup>

## Chapter IX

### p.273

Het gevolg hiervan was, dat gisteravond overal in Parijs groepjes van drie tot vierhonderd man een soort guerrilla voerden tegen de politie die het centrum van het Quartier Latin - rond het kruispunt van de Boulevards Saint Germain en Saint Michel - krachtig bezet hield, maar zich in dat centrum van alle kanten bestookt zag door de demonstranten, die hier en daar barricaden begonnen op te bouwen. Deze noodgedwongen tactiek van de demonstranten maakte de situatie gisteravond erg onoverzichtelijk. De sfeer aan de linkeroever was gisteravond in ieder geval benauwend. Het massale inzetten van de polities was voor veel demonstranten het bewijs dat "vannacht de Sorbonne zou worden aangevallen" en uit het optreden van de politie, die reeds zo snel begon met het offensief van traangasgranaten en waterkanonnen, bleek ook een grotere vastberadenheid om "er een eind aan te maken" dan een paar weken geleden.<sup>54</sup>

### p.275

Au 15 de la rue Soufflot, au siege de l'U.N.E.F. [Union Nationale des Etudiants de France, FH], la porte est gardée par deux solides gaillards, tandis que l'on observe de nombreuses allées et venues d'étudiants.<sup>55</sup>

De meest gehoorde kreten bij deze luidruchtige omgang waren "Professoren, geen agenten" en "De Sorbonne aan de studenten".<sup>56</sup>

### p.276

15 h. 30 À la République, c'est un véritable mer humaine qui déverse son trop plein dans les boulevards, dans les rues, dans les ruelles des alentours. Des hommes solides, massifs, un large brassard rouge à l'avant-bras. On canalise les manifestants. Il y a là des filles en mini-jupe, des ouvriers en casquette, des bourgeois, des lycéens, des concierges, des ecclésiastiques, des ingénieurs, des "anars" barbus, la petite "eglantine rouge" de mat en papier à la boutonnière et brandissant haut leur drapeau noir.<sup>57</sup>

### p.277

Midi, boulevard Haussmann. Dans un prodigieux encombrement où les automobilistes montrent une patience d'ange, une dame laisse sa voiture au milieu de la chaussée.

Je suis complètement à sec, je ne sais pas comment je vais rentrer.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Jo Cals cited in: Andreas Fickers, "Op zoek naar televisie 1925-1960," in *Een eeuw van beeld en geluid. Cultuurgeschiedenis van radio en televisie in Nederland*, ed. Bert Hogeboom, Sonja de Leeuw & Huub Wijfjes (Hilversum: Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid, 2012), 127.

<sup>54</sup> "Gevechten in Parijs," *de Volkskrant*, June 12, 1968.

<sup>55</sup> "Samedi et dimanche: après la drame la réflexion pour les étudiants...et les passants," *Le Figaro*, May 13, 1968.

<sup>56</sup> "Veldslag in Parijs," *de Volkskrant*, May 7, 1968.

<sup>57</sup> P. Bois, J. Creiser, P. Macaigne & J.-M. Tassel, "Un véritable fleuve humain a traversé Paris," *Le Figaro*, May 15, 1968.

<sup>58</sup> H. Debaisieux, P. Macaigne & L. Bonnet, "La vie quotidienne des Parisiens au temps... des grèves," *Le Figaro*, May 21, 1968.

**p.278**

C'est vers 20 heures que deux cents à trois cents manifestants avec drapeaux se massèrent sur la place Saint-Michel. Aussitôt des forces de police barrèrent les ponts. A 20 h. 15, débordant sur la rive gauche, par le Petit-Pont, elles chargeaient, lançant des grenades offensives et dégageant la.

A 21 h. 10, la place de l'Odéon est momentanément dégagé par les forces de police.

[...]

A 21 h. 30, des C.R.S. [The Compagnies Républicaine de Sécurité, FH] remontent la rue de Rennes, refoulent vers la gare Montparnasse un groupe hérissé de drapeaux rouges et noirs.<sup>59</sup>

Na de ontbinding van de demonstratie klonk uit de mond van enkele honderden linkse betogers de kreet "Op naar het Elysée", de residentie van de (sic) Gaulle.

[...]

Hier was overigens een rechtse demonstratie aan de gang, waaruit bleek dat niet geheel Parijs het protest tegen de politie en de Gaulle deelt. Deze rechtse betoging concentreerde zich vooral op de Chinese ambassade. Hier klonken leuzen als "Vietcong moordenaars" en "Frankrijk voor de Fransen."<sup>60</sup>

**p.280**

Mais surtout on parle. On parle énormément. [...] Un homme dans la soixantaine, fonctionnaire, veste de tweed fatigüe, rosette de la Légion d'Honneur, discute avec deux ouvriers et une grosse brune. "Il faut maintenant que le calme revienne. La violence ne mène à rien."

Premier ouvrier: "Si on n'avait pas foutu la pagaille, on ne s'occuperait pas de nous. Maintenant qu'on l'a fait, tout le monde découvre que nous avons raison."

Femme brune au monsieur décoré: "Espèce d'andouille."

Deuxième ouvrier: "Laisse causer. Tout le monde a le droit d'avoir son opinion."

Premier ouvrier: "Nous n'avons jamais rien obtenu par la négociation. Total, on crève de faim."

Fonctionnaire: "Vous ne paraissiez pas si maigre. Aujourd'hui, on veut tout et tout de suite. J'ai travaillé beaucoup plus dur que vous. Dans ma jeunesse, on ne connaissait même pas la viande."

Ouvrier: "C'est ça! Il va nous dire maintenant que les ouvriers n'ont pas droit au bifteck."

Fonctionnaire: "Vous extrapolez ma pensée."

Femme brune: "Quel abruti!"<sup>61</sup>

**p.284**

J'ai été frappé par l'énergie et le dévouement des garçons et des filles du service d'ordre. Mais ils étaient aidés dans leur tâche difficile par des militants syndicalistes entraînés, plus âgés, plus calmes, habitués de ce genre de situation. Ce sont des professionnels efficaces et habiles. Ils ont joué, samedi, un rôle très important en calmant les jeunes, plus facilement énervés, parfois un peu exaltés, souvent maladroit, quelquefois enclins à jouer au "petit dur".<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Max Clos et. al, "Après le saccage du centre de la capitale," *Le Figaro*, June 13, 1968.

<sup>60</sup> "Parijs in wanorde," *de Volkskrant*, May 14, 1968.

<sup>61</sup> Max Clos, "Au quartier latin après l'émeute...", *Le Figaro*, May 27, 1968.

<sup>62</sup> Clos, "Au Quartier Latin après l'émeute...."

**p.286**

Het was een unieke ervaring, Parijs '68. Het was een droom. Je ging niet meer naar bed. Je wilde overal bij zijn. De dagen en nachten regen zich aaneen. Het was poëzie. Het was natuurlijk ook iets anders. Maar voor mij, de verslaggever die daar toen rondliep, was het in de eerste plaats poëzie.<sup>63</sup>

Zo is Cees Nooteboom [...] de ongeëvenaarde meester in de evocatie van landschappen, steden, kathedralen, kloosters en beeldende kunstwerken. Zijn beschrijvingen van kleur, geluid, geur en weersgesteldheid worden doorvlochten met de uitdrukking van wat het waargenomen hem doet: gevoelens van verbazing, bewondering, vreugde, melancholie, en het is hierin dat de lezer z'n eigen emoties herkent en het gevoel krijgt dat hij iets leest wat hij al gezien heeft, maar vergeten was.<sup>64</sup>

**p.287**

We gaan aan de kant zitten, aan de voeten van een dame die elke tien minuten de Internationale aanheft of meezingt - en dan zien we het bijna twee uur voorbij trekken - een stoet die niet meer ophoudt, de boulevard naar twee kanten vol maakt, studenten, Spaanse arbeiders, ziekenhuispersoneel in het wit, zetters, drukkers, chauffeurs, hotelpersoneel, leraren, alle groepen met hun eigen gezang, alle leeftijden, vaak arm in arm, ongelooflijk veel vrouwen en meisjes ertussen, alles wat anders op alle Parijse trottoirs loopt, een gelukkige menigte, die tenslotte als een rivier in zichzelf verdwijnt. De kop is allang niet meer te zien, maar staande op de bank zie ik die rivier verder stromen, de grootste menigte die ik ooit gezien heb.<sup>65</sup>

Wie deze dagen en weken in Parijs doorbrengt wordt belegerd door woorden, gesproken en geschreven. Woorden van nu, en van die andere revolutionaire momenten die Frankrijk, en met Frankrijk Europa gekend heeft, 1789, 1848, 1871. [...] Samen moet het [the collage of quotes, FH] een indruk geven van de arena waarin de toeschouwers rondtollen, maar de acteurs verschrikkelijk goed weten wat ze doen. Het is maar een honderdste, misschien wel een duizendste wat ik hier heb. *Ik geef het met opzet zo chaotisch door als het uur na uur op me afkomt* [my italics, FH].<sup>66</sup>

**p.288**

Het blijft schitterend: Iemand spreekt vanuit één van de gouden loges, de mooie en ernstige, de eindelijk niet meer verveelde gezichten zijn die kant opgeheven, de argumenten stromen heen en weer in het langste gesprek ter wereld dat nu al dagenlang 24 uur per etmaal doorgaat. [...]

Als ik de Fransen ooit benijd heb is het nu, en met een jaloezie die op liefde lijkt ga ik naar bed en hoor nog net voordat ik inslaap iemand met een metersdik Spaans accent beneden op het plein roepen: "Vive les anarquistas!"<sup>67</sup>

**p.289**

"Wat de betekenis ervan zal zijn kan ik niet schatten. Maar het is het definitieve einde van een tijdperk, en dat geldt niet alleen voor Frankrijk."<sup>68</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Brokken, "De voorbijge passages," 21.

<sup>64</sup> Hans van Mierlo, "Laudatio bij uitreiking P.C. Hooftprijs 2004 aan Cees Nooteboom," in *In het oog van de storm. De wereld van Cees Nooteboom*, ed. László Földényi et al (Amsterdam/Antwerpen: Uitgeverij Atlas, 2006), 216.

<sup>65</sup> Cees Nooteboom, "Adieu," *de Volkskrant*, May 30, 1968.

<sup>66</sup> Cees Nooteboom, "De papieren revolutie," *de Volkskrant*, June 8, 1968.

<sup>67</sup> Cees Nooteboom, "1968?," *de Volkskrant*, May 31, 1968.

<sup>68</sup> Cees Nooteboom, "1968?," *de Volkskrant*, May 31, 1968.

Ik buig me voorover en zie dat het pamflet gaat over de commune van 1871 en bedenk ineens hoe vreemd het is, dat het verleden, de vroegere Franse revoluties veel werkelijker lijken dan wat er nu gebeurt; dat Thiers voorstelbaarder is dan de Gaulle en vraag me af of het komt door de ijle sfeer van afwachting, die er aan alle kanten nog steeds hangt. Boven het podium is een allegorische voorstelling geschilderd met lichamen van mythisch en bloot spek en van die vervelende vrouwen uit 1880 met een harp, die wel weer de Hoop zullen moeten uitbeelden en regelrecht maar met trage tred op de opgaande zon aflopen. Ik merk, dat ik niet meer kan en ga naar buiten. Het stortregent over de lege binnenplaats, over de spandoeken en over het portret van Trotski, over de zuilen, de trappen en de vlaggen.<sup>69</sup>

Een ding is zeker: als er niet meer gebeurt dan een aantal universitaire hervormingen, en een ander aantal materiële verbeteringen voor de arbeiders, als de structuren van deze in zijn eigen vuile badwater rondzwemmende maatschappij niet werkelijk veranderen blijft een totale generatie zitten met de grootste morele kater die er deze eeuw voor een *overlevende* [Nootboom's italics, FH] generatie geweest is, maar wat heet, kater, het zal een monster zijn van gebroken elan, van gefnuikt idealisme. Een monster dat op een dag onder hele andere vormen een beestachtige rekening van vernietigde hoop zal presenteren.<sup>70</sup>

#### p.290

Kenmerkend is daarbij, dat hij juist betekenisvolle details als zodanig heeft onderkend en dat hij dankzij zijn stilistisch vermogen de innerlijke dramatiek van voorvallen en situaties uitmuntend weet weer te geven. Nootbooms schrijfrant is impressionistisch. Maar wat hij in schijnbaar willekeurige, in wezen trefzekere, toetsen weergeeft, is veelal het essentiële. Door evocatieve formulering en directe zeggings stoot hij geregeld door in de diepere lagen van achtergrond en veroorzaking, met als resultaat dat hij niet slechts beschrijft, maar tevens interpreteert. Doordat zijn stijl beeldrijk is en met gevoel geladen, laat hij de geboeide lezer de gebeurtenissen direct meebelevens.<sup>71</sup>

Het woord achterkant is nu al zo vaak misbruikt - laten we zeggen dat ik altijd op zoek ben geweest naar de zijkant, de onderkant en de rafels van de gebeurtenissen. Ik ben letterlijk een dwarskijker. Op een gegeven ogenblik worden de gebeurtenissen gecanoniseerd, dan staan ze in een geschiedenisboek en lijken ze rond en af, maar in werkelijkheid zijn ze dat natuurlijk nooit geweest.<sup>72</sup>

## Chapter XI

#### p.331

Ziehier het dilemma. Vaak scoor je als journalist met zaken die haaks staan op je beroepsethiek, maar waarvan je weet dat je ermee wekomt. Er zit in de journalistiek een levensgrote spanning tussen individueel eigenbelang op de korte termijn en algemeen belang op de lange termijn, en ons systeem beloont vaak juist gedrag dat dit systeem op de lange termijn ondergraaft. Anders gezegd: journalisten functioneren binnen een context waarin je op vrijwel alle niveaus wordt aangemoedigd om iets anders te doen dan waar jouw organisatie officieel naar streeft. Met andere woorden: je

69 Cees Nootboom, "De revolutie wacht," *de Volkskrant*, June 6, 1968.

70 Cees Nootboom, "Sorbonne," *de Volkskrant*, June 1, 1968.

71 "Prijzen voor de dagbladjournalistiek. Rapport van de jury." [Unpublished jury report of 1969 from the archives of the Dutch press museum]

72 Piet Piryns, "Cees Nootboom: 'Ik ben bang dat het niet zo duidelijk aan mij te zien is, maar in mijn geheime hart ben ik natuurlijk een anarchist,'" in *Over Cees Nootboom. Beschouwingen en interviews*, ed. Daan Cartens (Den Haag: BZZZT6H, 1994), 211.

belooft een accuraat, afgewogen en objectief beeld van de werkelijkheid - het nieuws - en wat je levert is een overdreven, partijdig en eenzijdig beeld, want zo scoor je.<sup>73</sup>

### p.333

Voor dertig-minners geldt vaak het tegenovergestelde. Voor hen is wie het vertelt minstens zo belangrijk als wat er verteld wordt. Ze volgen niet 'de politiek', maar Frits Wester of Ron Fresen op Twitter. Ze lezen niet 'de economiepagina', maar Ewald Engelen of Joris Luyendijk. Ze willen, gechargeerd gezegd, *views*, *not news*. Logisch ook. Ze zijn opgegroeid in een tijd dat partij en ideologie werden ingewisseld voor partijleider en persoonlijkheid. In een tijd van: dag krant en omroep, hallo Facebook en Twitter. In een tijd ook dat Waarheid niet meer gedrukt staat, maar constant kan worden geüpdate. En vervolgens in duizend reacties eronder wordt betwist. Voor deze generatie zijn mensen en hun karakter, niet instituten en hun feiten, de nieuwe autoriteiten.<sup>74</sup>

Dat wil niet zeggen dat De Correspondent partijdig is, of niets geeft om feiten, integendeel. Onafhankelijkheid (in de zin dat je je niet heimelijk laat leiden door andere belangen dan het informeren van de lezer) en waarheidsvinding zijn de brandstof van goede journalistiek.<sup>75</sup>

### p.334

De paradigmaverschuiving moet denk ik zijn dat kranten niet gaan over nieuws, maar over inzicht. Niet wat er is gebeurd, maar wat er speelt. Je gebruikt het nieuws als aanleiding, als een aandacht trekkende kapstok voor je verhalen over de wereld zelf. En je legt steeds aan je lezers uit wat je doet, en waarom.<sup>76</sup>

### p.345

Pas de concierge ni de plaque en cuivre. Pour trouver l'association des jeunes Juifs de Téhéran, il faut se perdre dans le dedale des ruelles qui entourent la grande avenue de la Révolution. Au premier coup de sonnette, un grand brun glisse sa tête dans l'entrebâillement de la porte en métal, et vérifie l'identité de son visiteur avant de l'inviter à le suivre dans une belle villa à l'ancienne.<sup>77</sup>

"C'est en entendant parler de Nojoud à la télévision qu'un matin je me suis enfuie", murmure Arwa Abdul Mohammad Ali. Cette petite brunette au visage angélique revient de loin.<sup>78</sup>

Praat met murw gebeukte mensen in Ramallah en het gaat niet meer over de voors en tegens van zelfmoordaanslagen, over de positie van Arafat of de concurrentiestrijd tussen Hamas en de autoriteiten van Arafat. Sabr en Sumud zijn nu de trefwoorden, geduld en volharding. Niet dat er een Palestijn is te vinden die meent dat de intifadah moet ophouden. Israël en de nu diep gewantrouwde Arafat hebben acht jaar verstoppertje gespeeld rond de onderhandelingstafel, zeggen Palestijnen. Nu is het tijd voor een onafhankelijke staat in de bezette gebieden, tot die tijd gaat de opstand door.

<sup>73</sup> Joris Luyendijk, *De kloof tussen beeldvorming en werkelijkheid*, talk given on January 24, 2007 at the symposium 'Context' organized by the Council for Societal Development [Consultable at: [www.adviesorgaan-rmo.nl/dsresource?objectid=31118&type=org](http://www.adviesorgaan-rmo.nl/dsresource?objectid=31118&type=org), last consulted on June 9, 2013].

<sup>74</sup> Rob Wijnberg, "Waarom een verhaal niet zonder verteller kan," *De Correspondent*, April 13, 2013 [Consultable at: <http://blog.decorrespondent.nl/post/47858813554/waarom-een-verhaal-niet-zonder-verteller-kan>, last consulted on April 3, 2014].

<sup>75</sup> Wijnberg, "Waarom een verhaal niet zonder verteller kan."

<sup>76</sup> Luyendijk, "Geen nieuws, maar inzicht."

<sup>77</sup> Delphine Minoui, "La peur de la communauté juive d'Iran," *Le Figaro*, March 29, 2006.

<sup>78</sup> Minoui, D. (2009). 'Au Yémen, la révolte des petites filles mariées de force'. In: *Le Figaro*. 24 February 2009; [www.lefigaro.fr/international/2009/02/24/01003-20090224ARTFIG00311-au-yemen-la-revolte-des-petites-filles-mariees-de-force-.php](http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2009/02/24/01003-20090224ARTFIG00311-au-yemen-la-revolte-des-petites-filles-mariees-de-force-.php)

Als Israël weigert te onderhandelen zolang de terreur doorgaat, dan weigeren de Palestijnen te onderhandelen zolang de bezetting doorgaat.<sup>79</sup>

**p.346**

Maar de bitterheid is algemeen. 'Toen Israël ons de vorige keer binnenviel, waren er demonstraties in Europa en Amerika en de Arabische wereld', zegt een krantenmannetje. 'Maar nu is het stil. We staan er weer alleen voor.' De naam Bush ontlokt nog slechts minachtend geginnik.

[...]

'Misschien is het wel beter zo', peinst architect Ya'qoub. [...] 'Nu de Israëliërs ons weer direct bezetten, in plaats van dat Arafat ertussen zit, is alles veel duidelijker, meent Ya'qoub. 'Uiteindelijk zullen de Israëliërs ons een staat moeten geven. Ik bedoel, wij gaan hier dus niet weg. Wat willen ze doen? Ons tot in de lengte der dagen koloniseren?'<sup>80</sup>

"SNIPER!" Un tireur isolé vient d'ouvrir le feu sur une patrouille d'un bataillon de la 10e division de montagne, sur une route de campagne au sud de Youssoufiyah, région agricole et mal fame du pays Sunnite, au sud-ouest de Bagdad. Depuis les Humvee blindés garés au bord d'un piste, les soldats ripostent dans la direction des tirs, avec plus d'intensité que de précision. Les traçantes filent comme dans un jeu vidéo vers une digue à motié effondrée, faisant décoller quelques échassiers.<sup>81</sup>

**p.347**

Le lieutenant Ives frappe contre le portail métallique. Une jeune femme un peu forte entrouvre le battant. [...] "Bonjour. Nous voudrions parler à votre mari", demande le lieutenant Ives dans un arabe rudimentaire. "Il n'y a personne. Tout le monde est au travail", répond-elle. Le lieutenant a du mal à comprendre la réponse.

[...]

"Qui sont ces hommes?", interroge Ives en arabe. Le lieutenant ne perd pas en occasion d'essayer ses rudiments. Il veut convaincre les habitants de Karma que les Américains ne sont pas là pour les occuper.<sup>82</sup>

Un homme d'à peine trente ans en survêtement mauve ouvre la porte avec un sourire contraint. Il accompagne les marines qui rassemblent un groupe de voisins sur un terrain vague derrière la maison. Des femmes voilées de noir regardent la scène de loin. "Qui tire sur les Américains?", demande le lieutenant. "Ce ne sont pas des gens d'ici", essaye d'expliquer un moustachu en djellaba. "Écoutez! Je commence à en avoir assez!", l'interrompt l'officier qui, tout à coup, n'essaye plus de parler arabe. L'interprète traduit à toute vitesse le lieutenant Ives, qui pointe son doigt menaçant vers le petit groupe d'Irakiens.<sup>83</sup>

**p.348**

Car une fois débarqué du "rhino", rien de plus facile que d'oublier l'Irak devasté qui entoure l'Amérak, comme une mer déchaînée qui bat les côtes d'une île enchantée. Bien à l'abri des hauts murs de l'enceinte, la puissante logistique américaine a transformé l'ancien quartier réserve des hiérarques

<sup>79</sup> Joris Luyendijk, "Vuil smeult in bezet Ramallah," *NRC Handelsblad*, July 3, 2002.

<sup>80</sup> Luyendijk, "Vuil smeult in bezet Ramallah."

<sup>81</sup> Adrien Jaulmes, "La guerre sans illusions des GI en Irak," *Le Figaro*, March 7, 2007.

<sup>82</sup> Adrien Jaulmes, "Irak: les marines contre un ennemi invisible," *Le Figaro*, December 5, 2005.

<sup>83</sup> Jaulmes, "Irak: les marines contre un ennemi invisible."

du régime baasiste en Xanadu sur les berges du Tigre. La plupart de ses habitants n'ont jamais mis les pieds dans le véritable Irak: la zone rouge.<sup>84</sup>

**p.348-349**

À l'intérieur de l'enceinte, l'Amérak vit à l'heure américaine. [...] Dans les réfectoires climatisés installés par Kellog, Brown and Root, une filiale de la société texane Halliburton, on sert en abondance des plats américains, poulet frit, hamburgers, caesar salad et pancakes. [...] Un mall s'est installé au centre de la zone verte. Un PX [military equipment store, FH] y vend des gadgets militaires, des plats cuisines tex-mex et des hot-dogs, ou des mugs estampillés "Operation Iraqi Freedom". Dans des petites boutiques, on achète des tapis ou l'on s'y fait coiffer par des Irakiens privilégiés ayant obtenu l'autorisation de pénétrer dans cet eden.<sup>85</sup>

**p.349**

Mais derrière ces aspects folklorique, la zone verte reste avant tout, quatre ans après la chute de Saddam Hussein, le plus éclatant symbole de l'incompréhension tragique que s'est établie dès l'arrivée des troupes américaines à Bagdad entre la population irakienne et une armée qui se voit comme des libérateurs. Et de l'incapacité américaine à envisager de délicates questions politiques sous un angle autre que logistique.<sup>86</sup>

**p.351**

In de zomer van vorig jaar kreeg onze buurvrouw, een paranoïde katholieke Palestijnse ouwe vrijster, opeens mysterieuze telefoontjes. Om drie of vier uur 's nachts ging de telefoon, en als ze dan opnam, werd er na een paar seconden stilte opgehangen.

Dat ging drie dagen door en toen was de buurvrouw gesloopt. Waarom ging ze niet naar de politie, vroeg ik, maar die vraag ontweek ze.<sup>87</sup>

**p.352**

Als je in een stad bent waar bommen op worden gegooid, dan voel je van alles, maar bovenal machteloosheid. Opeens is jouw leven in handen van een onbekende, iemand achter een paneeltje of in een cockpit. [...] Ik voelde een angst zo misselijkmakend dat ik er direct een andere emotie overheen legde. De Palestijnen om mij heen deden dat ook, en zo voerden wij met zijn allen het toneelstukje op: oh, daar slaat weer een bom in. Hahaha. Doet ons niks. Dat is natuurlijk onzin. Doodsangst druk je niet straffeloos weg.<sup>88</sup>

**p.355**

Ik ben zelf een keer gebombardeerd, en ik moet daar vaak aan denken dezer dagen. Het was in Gazastad en qua omvang en duur veel en veel minder erg dan wat de mensen in Bagdad, Mosul, Basra en Tikrit al zes dagen doorstaan. Maar ik denk toch dat er parallellen zijn en die gaan vooral over de categorie slachtoffers die de statistieken niet halen. We horen nu over burgerdoden en gewonden. Als die body count niet te zeer oploopt, is dit een 'schone' oorlog geweest. Ik denk dat alleen mensen

<sup>84</sup> Adrien Jaulmes, "Voyage en 'Amérak', la zone verte de Bagdad," *Le Figaro*, February 26, 2007.

<sup>85</sup> Jaulmes, "Voyage en 'Amérak', la zone verte de Bagdad."

<sup>86</sup> Jaulmes, "Voyage en 'Amérak', la zone verte de Bagdad."

<sup>87</sup> Luyendijk, "Banger voor politie dan voor de dief."

<sup>88</sup> Joris Luyendijk, "'je voelt van alles, bovenal machteloosheid,'" *NRC Handelsblad*, March 25, 2003.

zonder enige oorlogservaring dit soort dingen kunnen [zeggen].<sup>89</sup>

Laat eens zien hoe Amerikaanse scherpschutters zulke goede geweren en verrekijkers hebben dat ze Iraakse soldaten kunnen doodschieten zonder dat die Irakezen ooit wisten dat er een Amerikaan in de buurt was. Vergeet dan ook niet het detail dat Iraakse dienstplichtigen een soort ten dode opgeschreven slaven zijn; als ze zich proberen over te geven, schiet hun commandant hen ter plekke dood. Maar als ze zich niet overgeven krijgen ze een daisy cutter [a type of bomb,FH] op hun kop. Dat heb ik althans geleerd van dat bombardement in Gaza. De term 'schone oorlog' hoort echt thuis in het rijtje zwangere maagd, democratische dictator en lof der zotheid.<sup>90</sup>

#### p.356

'Je moet niet zo staren', zegt mijn gastheer bij de Jeddah Private Beach Club grijnzend. 'Hier, neem mijn zonnebril.' Betrapt kijk ik op en richt mijn blik demonstratief op de kale pier van deze enige gemengde strandclub van heel Saoedi-Arabië. Dan, tegen wil en dank, voel ik opeens begrip voor mijn Arabische medeman. Hoe kon dat nou gebeuren?<sup>91</sup>

En toen er eentje op hoge hakken en minimale bedekking kwam langslopen, kon ik niet anders dan hoofdschuddend bij mezelf denken: ja zeg, die vraagt er ook om. De hoer.<sup>92</sup>

#### p.357

Deze reis maakte ik als 'embedded journalist'. Wat 'embedded' precies inhield moest nog blijken, en of ik in de strikte zin van het woord een 'journalist' kon worden genoemd viel te betwijfelen. Maar net als 'veiligheidssituatie' is 'journalist' een rekbaar begrip.<sup>93</sup>

'Gaaf u stemmen?' vraag ik aan de sjeik. 'Geef u uw mensen opdracht te stemmen?'

In oktober 2008 zijn er provinciale verkiezingen in Irak.

Van stemmen lijkt de sjeik nog nooit gehoord te hebben. Uit zijn gezichtsuitdrukking maak ik op dat wat vlooiën voor de hond zijn democratie voor de mensen is.<sup>94</sup>

#### p.358

Ik vroeg me af of de overste echt zijn ogen zou dichtdoen en of hij dan zou dromen over Afghanistan, of toch over de Duitse laagvlakte. En zijn tanks die dan binnen twee uur bij de voormalige grens met de DDR zouden zijn. Dit keer niet als oefening, dit keer in het echt. Misschien kwamen de Russen toch nog eens. Je wist het niet. Alles is mogelijk.<sup>95</sup>

Op de uniformen na leek het of we aan het wachten waren op de charter naar Mallorca.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Luyendijk, "je voelt van alles, bovenal machteloosheid."

<sup>90</sup> Luyendijk, "je voelt van alles, bovenal machteloosheid."

<sup>91</sup> Joris Luyendijk, "Help! Vrouwen in bikini!," *NRC Handelsblad*, July 6, 2002.

<sup>92</sup> Luyendijk, "Help! Vrouwen in bikini!"

<sup>93</sup> Arnon Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," in *Kamermeisjes en soldaten. Arnon Grunberg onder de mensen* (Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 2009), 11.

<sup>94</sup> Arnon Grunberg, "Irak," in *Kamermeisjes en soldaten. Arnon Grunberg onder de mensen* (Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 2009), 260.

<sup>95</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 15-16.

<sup>96</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 12.



Dan hijs ik me in mijn thermo-ondergoed, trek mijn slippers aan en loop naar de douche. Een minuut of vijf lopen van mijn tent.

Van majoor Robert heb ik gehoord dat er goede en slechte douches zijn, zoals er ook goede en slechte toiletten zijn. Zo'n kamp heeft zijn eigen wetten.<sup>97</sup>

### p.359

Van hout is er op miniatuurniveau een poging gedaan Coney Island na te bootsen. Het bouwsel is helaas niet af. Rondom de boardwalk zijn winkeltjes waar souvenirs kunnen worden gekocht, er zit een kleermaker, in een vrachtwagen bevindt zich een Burger King. Er is een Pizza Hut en een Tim Hortons, waar iced cappuccino's, bagels en donuts te koop zijn. De donuts zijn uitverkocht.<sup>98</sup>

'Primitieve maar mooie mensen, die Afghanen,' zegt hij, 'en alles morgen. Morgen, morgen, morgen. Maar uiteindelijk krijg je het wel van hen gedaan.'<sup>99</sup>

'Wat zijn jullie aan het doen?' vraagt de luitenant.

'We maken een ommetje,' zeggen ze.

'Jullie hebben een basketbalveldje nodig,' zegt de luitenant.

'Ik zal zorgen dat jullie een basketbalveldje krijgen.'<sup>100</sup>

We zijn de kerstman in camouflagepak.<sup>101</sup>

Tenten, af en toe een jeep die voorbijkomt, een Franse militair die aan het joggen is. Dit is dus Kabul, althans het gedeelte van Kabul dat veilig is voor ons westerlingen, die stabiliteit, vrede en voorspoed naar het verpauperde land komen brengen.<sup>102</sup>

### p.360

'Weet je wat Martin Sheen zegt aan het begin? "I'm her a week now, waiting for a mission, getting softer. Every minute I stay in this room, I get weaker. And every minute Charlies squats in the bush, he gets stronger." Daarom ben ik bij het leger gegaan.'

Een lid van de Apocalypse Now-sekte, die kwam je niet vaak meer tegen. Maar ik was er ook lid van en ik kon hem aanvullen.<sup>103</sup>

### p.361

'[M]aar dit keer heb ik een kaasschaaf bij me.' En er verscheen een triomfantelijke lach op zijn gezicht. Hij zei, alsof hij iets vertrouwelijks vertelde: 'Als ze eenmaal in de gaten hebben dat je kaas bij je hebt, wil iedereen een stuk. Maar als ze met een zakmes in de kaas gaan snijden, dan is die zo op. Daarom heb ik dit keer een kaasschaaf meegenomen, zodat iedereen een dun plakje krijgt, begrijp je? Zodat ze dit keer mijn kaas niet voor mijn neus opvreten.' Ik voelde genegenheid voor sergeant Jordy, die Afghanistan niet onvoorbereid zou betreden.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 35.

<sup>98</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 31.

<sup>99</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 33.

<sup>100</sup> Grunberg, "Irak," 258.

<sup>101</sup> Grunberg, "Irak," 259.

<sup>102</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 24.

<sup>103</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 19-20.

<sup>104</sup> Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 13-14.

Luisterend naar het luchtalarm maakt zich een krankzinnige vreugde van mij meester, een opwinding die ik nog nooit zo heb gevoeld. Ze willen me doden, dus ik besta.<sup>105</sup>

Maar uiteindelijk gaat het om dat allesoverheersende idee dat je overvalt, al suit het niets: de dierlijke en vreugdevolle wetenschap dat je bestaat. Zonder twijfel, zonder bijgedachten, zonder stoorzender. En direct daarna die kortstondige glimp van onoverwinnelijkheid.<sup>106</sup>

**p.362**

Als ik iets geleerd heb in Irak is dat alle overtuigingen gevoed worden door geld en dus macht. Wat vanuit de verte door de een blind fanatisme is en voor de ander verzet, is van dichtbij economie. Dat wij tot nu toe blind zijn gebleven voor de economie van de overtuigingen is een vorm van exotisme.<sup>107</sup>

In de auto naast het machinegeweer onder de keffihey herinner ik me de woorden van een wijnrecensent van de *Financial Times*: 'Ik heb de toekomst gezien. Zij is chardonnay en sauvignon blanc.' Ik heb de nieuwe mens gezien. Hij is hurling. Anders dan Machiavelli meende, kunnen huurlingen effectief zijn. Ze weten één ding: dat het beter is om ted oden dan om gedood te worden. Wie het verhaal van de nieuwe mens wil optekenen zou embedded moeten gaan bij de huurlingen. Of beter nog: zelf huurling worden.<sup>108</sup>

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**105** Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 39.

**106** Grunberg, "Afghanistan I," 52.

**107** Grunberg, "Irak," 270.

**108** Arnon Grunberg, "Groene Zone," in *Kamermeisjes en soldaten. Arnon Grunberg onder de mensen* (Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 2009), 280.



# Nederlandse samenvatting

Dit proefschrift onderzoekt de ontwikkeling van de reportage als een tekstueel genre in relatie tot de opkomst van de verslaggeving als een nieuwe vorm van journalistiek in de Britse, Nederlandse en Franse dagbladjournalistiek tussen 1880 en 2005. Het is onderdeel van een breder onderzoeksproject naar de ontwikkeling van de Europese journalistiek 'Reporting at the Boundaries of the Public Sphere. Form, Style and Strategy of European Journalism, 1880-2005'. De focus van de dissertatie ligt op de analyse van de tekstuele output van de journalistiek tussen 1880 en 2005. Een kernuitgangspunt van deze studie is dat deze tekstuele conventies een belangrijke rol spelen in het ondersteunen van de waarheidsclaim die de journalistiek maakt. De tekstuele kenmerken communiceren aan de lezer welke onderliggende normen en routines de journalist hanteert bij de verslaggeving. De kenmerken bestendigen daarmee het stilzwijgende contract tussen de journalistiek en de lezer dat er een betrouwbaar beeld van de werkelijkheid wordt gegeven. Zo gezien biedt een analyse van de formele conventies van de krant inzicht in de manier waarop de journalistiek haar eigen praktijk beschouwd. Zoals Barnhurst en Nerone het formuleren: "Any media form includes a proposed or normative model of the medium itself. Put another way, the form includes the way the medium imagines itself to be and to act." De onderzoeksvraag die in dit proefschrift wordt beantwoord is daarom:

*Hoe hebben de tekstuele kenmerken van de reportage zich ontwikkeld in relatie tot de algemene ontwikkeling van de verslaggeving in Britse, Nederlandse en Franse kranten tussen 1880 en 2005?*

## Het 'standaardverhaal' van de geschiedenis van de journalistiek

Juist in de gekozen periode maakte de journalistiek een fundamentele ontwikkeling door. In het 'standaardverhaal' van de geschiedenis van de journalistiek wordt de suggestie gewekt dat de Europese journalistiek - zij het in enigszins afwijkende tempo's - zich gericht heeft ontwikkeld tot een professionele praktijk die vormgegeven wordt door het objectiviteitsideaal. Er wordt een beeld geschetst van de persgeschiedenis, waarin er vanaf de tweede helft van de 19e eeuw een professionele massapers ontstond die invloedrijke normen, routines en tekstuele conventies gericht op de feitelijke weergave van nieuwsgebeurtenissen ontwikkelde. Deze manier van journalistiek bedrijven verschilde fundamenteel van de gevestigde journalistieke praktijk, waarin een vorm van argumentatieve reflectie op die gebeurtenissen centraal stond. De redacteur die vanachter zijn of haar bureau ingekomen informatie verwerkte en op basis daarvan de wereld beschouwde, werd ingeruild voor de actieve verslaggever die ter plaatse het nieuws onderzoekt, betrokkenen interviewt en daar op objectieve wijze verslag van doet. Die journalistieke praktijk wordt vanaf dat moment als beeldbepalend beschouwd voor de Europese journalistiek.

De comparatieve aard van dit onderzoek naar de dagbladjournalistiek laat echter duidelijk de verschillen in de journalistieke ontwikkeling van de drie landen zien. Daarmee gaat dit proefschrift in tegen het standaardverhaal van de geschiedenis van de journalistiek, dat de suggestie wekt dat de Europese journalistiek uniform en onvermijdelijk het objectiviteitsregime als professionele

standaard heeft geaccepteerd. De resultaten wijzen veeleer op de geleidelijkheid, complexiteit en veelvormigheid van de journalistieke ontwikkeling in de verschillende landen. Die diversiteit is het resultaat van de specifieke culturele, institutionele en commerciële contexten waarbinnen een competitie tussen verschillende opvattingen over de juiste journalistieke praktijk zich afspeelde.

## De reportage als sleutelgenre

Binnen dit onderzoek staat de reportage centraal. Dit genre is nauw verbonden met de journalistieke ontwikkelingen in de verslaggeving die zich vanaf het einde van de 19e eeuw begonnen te manifesteren in de krant. De reportage wordt gekenmerkt door een manier van verslaggeven die poogt om het publiek de gebeurtenis en de ervaring die daarbij hoort indirect te laten herbeleven. Het is daarom door Martin Kött gedefinieerd als een “chronologische-atmosphärische Verlaufsschilderung”. De autoriteit van de reportage ligt besloten in het idee dat de verslaggever ter plaatse was en getuige was van de gebeurtenis of er aldaar onderzoek naar heeft gedaan en betrokkenen heeft gesproken. Tegelijkertijd vindt het genre haar wortels in de evocatieve en literaire schrijfrant waardoor de reflectieve journalistiek zich kenmerkt. Als gevolg van die tweeledige achtergrond brengt de definiëring van de reportage vaak een zekere ambivalentie met zich mee. Het genre is zowel omschreven als een onafhankelijke en ongekleurde weergave van de realiteit, als ook beschouwd als de representatie van een geëngageerde en persoonlijke impressie van de werkelijkheid. Om die reden biedt een analyse van de manier waarop dit genre zich ontwikkeld heeft binnen verschillende journalistieke culturen tegen de achtergrond van de algemene ontwikkelingen binnen de journalistiek een interessant inzicht in de pluriforme wijze waarop verschillende opvattingen met betrekking tot de journalistieke praktijk in deze periode met elkaar concurreerden en zich ook met elkaar vermengden.

## Methode

Via een combinatie van een longitudinale kwantitatieve inhoudsanalyse van de tekstuele conventies van drie kranten per land en kwalitatieve casestudies met betrekking tot de reportage is de pluriforme ontwikkeling van de journalistiek in de drie landen geanalyseerd. Aan de hand van een sample, waarin elke 20 jaar (1885, 1905, 1925, 1965, 1985, 2005) twee weken aan krantenmateriaal, oftewel 105.456 artikelen afkomstig uit 624 nummers van 9 verschillende kranten, is de journalistieke ontwikkeling geanalyseerd. Op basis van deze inhoudsanalyse is een breed beeld van de journalistieke ontwikkelingen in de dagbladjournalistiek geschetst, waarbij de centrale ontwikkelingen en spanningsvelden geïdentificeerd zijn. Deze zijn verder uitgewerkt in de vier casestudies, waarin de reportage met betrekking tot een bepaald onderwerp en periode nauwgezet geanalyseerd is. Deze casestudies richten zich respectievelijk op reportages over de Eerste Wereldoorlog, koloniale reisreportages in het interbellum, reportages met betrekking tot de Parijse revolutie in 1968 en ten slotte op hedendaagse reportages over het Midden-Oosten. Een dergelijke combinatie van onderzoeksmethoden is vruchtbaar gebleken, omdat het de generaliserende kracht van de inhoudsanalyse combineert met de analytische diepgang en complexiteit die in de casestudies tot uitdrukking komt.

## De resultaten

Mijn analyse laat zien dat de journalistiek in Groot-Brittannië, Nederland en Frankrijk zich vanaf de tweede helft van de 19e eeuw ontwikkelde tot een praktijk die gericht was op een feitelijke weergave van de werkelijkheid die geldig was voor een zo groot mogelijk publiek. De journalistieke praktijk veranderde en de argumentatieve vorm van reflectieve journalistiek boette inderdaad aan dominantie in ten faveure van een op gebeurtenissen en feiten gerichte verslaggeving ter plaatse. De reflectieve journalistiek werd echter niet vervangen, maar de nieuwe opvattingen met betrekking tot verslaggeving werden in eerste instantie toegevoegd aan het repertoire. Dit leidde in veel gevallen tot mengvormen, waarin kenmerken van de verschillende journalistieke opvattingen terug te vinden zijn.

In alle landen vertolkten de nieuwe populaire kranten gericht op een massapubliek een voortrekkersrol in de ontwikkeling van de op feiten georiënteerde journalistiek. Echter, overall stond deze vorm van journalistiek nog in de kinderschoenen en werd er volop geëxperimenteerd met nieuwe routines en vormen. Als gevolg van de kritische bejegening van de populaire kranten die vaak het verwijt kregen het nieuws sensationeel en oppervlakkig te verslaan, kwamen ook de nieuwe opvattingen over de journalistiek in eerste instantie veelal in een negatief licht te staan.

### *De verslaggever als betrouwbare getuige*

Dit beeld wordt bevestigd door de analyse van de reportages over de Eerste Wereldoorlog. De oorlogsreportages uit alle drie de landen laten zien dat de autoriteit van deze stukken besloten zit in de aanwezigheid ter plaatse van de verslaggever. De werkelijkheid wordt weergegeven als het resultaat van de perceptie van de verslaggever, die zijn of haar ervaringen zo levensecht en authentiek mogelijk weer probeert te geven. De analyse van de reportages maakt duidelijk dat informatie en ervaring nog onlosmakelijk met elkaar verbonden waren in deze periode. Wel zijn er verschillen tussen de landen te onderscheiden. Waar de Nederlandse en zeker de Franse reportages zeer beeldend geschreven zijn en proberen de werkelijkheid echt tot leven te brengen via uitbundige beeldspraak, zijn de Britse reportages terughoudender en beperken deze zich tot gedetailleerde, maar veel minder expressieve beschrijvingen. Dat verschil heeft ten dele te maken met de sterke oriëntatie van de Nederlandse en Franse journalistiek op de literatuur. Rond die tijd werd de literaire standaard voor een belangrijk deel bepaald door stromingen als het naturalisme en realisme, waarin evocatieve en natuurgetrouwe beschrijvingen centraal stonden. Daarentegen was de Britse journalistiek al geleidelijk afstand aan het nemen van het literaire domein, wat te merken was in de tekstuele conventies van de reportages.

### *Verschillende professionele idealen*

Dit onderscheid werd nog sterker in het interbellum. De Eerste Wereldoorlog had alle journalisten doordrongen van het belang van betrouwbare informatie en de journalistieke standaarden waren onderwerp van debat. Verslaggeving ter plaatse en het interviewen van mensen begon geleidelijk aan vaker voor te komen, al was het zeker nog geen gemeengoed. In het debat over de journalistieke standaarden kwam deze vorm van verslaggeving echter wel centraal te staan en begon de negatieve houding ten opzichte van deze praktijk af te nemen. In alle landen professionaliseerde de journalistiek en werd er gehamerd op het belang van 'feitelijkheid' en kwam ook de term 'objectiviteit' naar voren in het debat.

Tussen de manier waarop er invulling werd gegeven aan deze termen en tussen de richting waarin de verslaggeving zich ontwikkelde, bleven er verschillen bestaan tussen enerzijds de Britse

en anderzijds de Nederlandse en Franse journalistiek; ze werden zelfs groter. Binnen de Franse en in iets mindere mate de Nederlandse journalistiek centreerde het debat zich rondom het ideaal van de *grand reporter*, die op onafhankelijke wijze zijn of haar impressies van een bepaalde situatie of gebeurtenis zo authentiek mogelijk probeert te beschrijven. Daarbij bleef een beeldende en expressieve schrijfstijl, waarbij je door de ogen van de verslaggever mee lijkt te kijken, een belangrijk onderdeel van de vorm. In Groot-Brittannië daarentegen werd er juist verder afstand genomen van die manier van verslaggeven en werd de connectie tussen de informatie en de persoonlijke ervaring van de verslaggever die daaraan ten grondslag ligt verbroken. Als gevolg werd de belangrijkste informatie bondig en zakelijk weergegeven, waarbij het bericht gedepersonaliseerd werd en de verslaggever in de tekst niet meer te herkennen valt als bron van de informatie.

Die bondige en onpersoonlijke manier van weergeven wordt veelal geassocieerd met feitelijke en objectiviteit, waardoor vaak betoogd is dat de Britse journalistiek het objectiviteitsregime al snel accepteerde, in tegenstelling tot landen als Frankrijk en Nederland. Echter, het objectiviteitsregime werd niet in al haar facetten, maar slechts ten dele omarmd. De onpersoonlijke weergave van feitelijke informatie ging namelijk regelmatig gepaard met expliciete waardeoordelen met betrekking tot de situatie of gebeurtenis in kwestie. Dat Frankrijk en Nederland het objectiviteitsregime volledig afwezen, is ook te kort door de bocht. In beide landen speelde de term objectiviteit een rol in het journalistieke debat, maar de invulling paste zich aan aan de gevestigde journalistieke tradities. Zo werd objectiviteit met name opgevat als onpartijdigheid en neutraliteit. De subjectiviteit van de verslaggever die zich manifesteert in gekleurde impressies van de wereld werd als onvermijdelijk geaccepteerd en stond niet in de weg dat zulke beschrijvingen als feitelijk werden beschouwd. Juist daardoor werd er geprobeerd om een expliciet oordeel over die inherent onvolledige en gekleurde informatie achterwege te laten. Zowel in de Britse als de Nederlandse en Franse journalistiek werd er dus getracht om de subjectiviteit van de verslaggever in te dammen om een algemeen geldige weergave van de werkelijkheid te geven. De landen deden dit echter op tegengestelde manieren, waarbij noties als 'feitelijkheid' en 'objectiviteit' op verschillende wijze werden ingevuld.

### ***De intrede van het objectiviteitsregime***

Pas na de Tweede Wereldoorlog werd het objectiviteitsregime in haar totaliteit de dominante journalistieke opvatting die de dagelijkse praktijk bepaalde. Het streven naar een algemeen geldige representatie van de werkelijkheid werd dus geüniformeerd. In de eerste decennia na de oorlog werd de combinatie van een onpersoonlijke presentatie vanuit een onpartijdig en neutraal standpunt gemeengoed in de journalistiek in alle drie de landen en raakte de reflectieve journalistiek op een zijspoor. De uniformering van de journalistieke praktijk zorgde ervoor dat de populaire pers en de serieuze kwaliteitspers dichter bij elkaar kwamen te staan. Hierdoor voelde met name de kwaliteitskranten de noodzaak om het verschil met populaire kranten te benadrukken en polariseerde het journalistiek debat omtrent journalistieke kwaliteit. De kwaliteitskranten beschuldigde de populaire pers van sensationele en daardoor vertekende verslaggeving, waarbij zij hun eigen journalistieke praktijk presenteerden als de enige betrouwbare manier die zich echt aan de normen van het objectiviteitsregime hield. Hoewel de populaire pers zich verzette tegen een dergelijke waterscheiding, werd deze tweedeling tussen kwaliteit en populair dominant in het journalistieke debat.

De dominantie van het objectiviteitsregime betekende het einde van de reportages die openlijk leunden op de persoonlijke impressies van de verslaggever. Tegelijkertijd riep het een bescheiden

tegenbeweging op, die de objectieve journalistiek bekritiseerde. Deze door de counterculture van de jaren zestig geïnspireerde stroming in de journalistiek was overgewaaid uit Amerika en wees de objectieve journalistiek af als een epistemologische onmogelijkheid. Volgens critici ging het veeleer om een onbewust partijdige verslaggeving, die het perspectief van de machthebbers in de samenleving ondersteunde. Als alternatief pleitten deze kritische journalisten voor een subjectieve en opiniërende journalistiek, waarin opgekomen werd voor de minderheden in de samenleving. Vooral in tijdschriften zoals *Vrij Nederland*, *de Haagsche Post* in Nederland, het dagblad *Libération* in Frankrijk en *Red Dwarf* en *IT* in Groot-Brittannië werd er geëxperimenteerd met nieuwe journalistieke vormen, maar een brede impact op de dagbladjournalistiek bleef achterwege. Dit betekende niet dat de traditie van persoonlijke journalistiek volledig uit de krant verdween, maar dat deze op een duidelijk afgebakend zijpad kwam. Het werd de uitzondering, die ook als zodanig in de krant gepresenteerd werd, in plaats van de regel.

### ***Professionele stabiliteit en de afkalving ervan***

Al met al luidden de jaren zestig het begin in van een periode in de journalistiek, waarin de professionele standaarden van het objectiviteitsregime als vanzelfsprekend gezien werden. Deze periode waarin er een grote mate van professionele stabiliteit heerste en de dagbladpers door samenwerking op commercieel en institutioneel gebied ook financieel stabiel bleef, duurde tot grofweg het nieuwe millennium. Vanaf die periode namen de zorgen over de handhaving van de kwaliteitstandaarden hand over hand toe en kwam de journalistiek ook commercieel gezien in steeds zwaarder weer. Er werd - en wordt - vooral gevreesd voor het voortbestaan van de kwaliteitskranten die de meeste moeite hadden om de journalistieke kosten die ze maakten te bekostigen met advertentiegeden en verkoopinkomsten. De focus op de als belangwekkend beschouwde, maar vaak minder populaire onderwerpen als politiek, internationale betrekkingen en economie trok in toenemende mate een wissel op de aantrekkingskracht op lezers en adverteerders en dus op de algehele inkomsten. Dit heeft geleid tot de angst dat kwaliteitskranten hierdoor gedwongen werden om hun standaarden los te laten om rendabel te blijven.

Dergelijke veranderingen in de journalistiek waarbij er gezocht wordt naar nieuwe standaarden en vormen worden vaak gekarakteriseerd als 'dumbing-down' of vervlakking van de journalistiek. Mijn analyse laat echter zien dat een dergelijk perspectief zeer reductief en normatief is. Allereerst blijken de verschillende kwaliteitskranten verschillend te reageren op de nieuwe situatie, waarbij sommige vasthouden aan het gevestigde kwaliteitsprofiel en anderen zich juist aanpassen aan de veranderende wensen van het publiek. Daarbij is het echter te kort door de bocht om elke deviatie van het objectiviteitsregime over een kam te scheren en automatisch te beschouwen als bewijs voor de afkalving van de journalistieke kwaliteit. Vanuit een dergelijke visie wordt het objectiviteitsregime gezien als de enige juiste journalistieke standaard, waarbij brede ontwikkelingen in de westerse cultuur die uiting geven aan twijfel over de uitgangspunten van het objectiviteitsregime genegeerd worden.

De resultaten van mijn onderzoek laten echter zien dat er zich een andere visie op de journalistiek heeft ontwikkeld - en nog in ontwikkeling is - die concurreert met het objectiviteitsregime en als alternatief fungeert. Deze kijkt op de journalistiek, die haar wortels heeft in de nieuwe vormen van journalistiek in de zestiger jaren, onderkent de actieve rol van de verslaggever bij het vormgeven van de journalistieke representatie van de werkelijkheid en wil daar transparant over zijn. Grof gezegd heeft dat tot twee vormen van subjectieve journalistiek geleid. Een openlijk subjectieve vorm waarin de verslaggever zijn of haar eigen positie duidelijk maakt in het stuk en de eigen



keuzes in het verslaggevingsproces verantwoordt. In deze vorm zijn verslaggevers bewust van hun eigen subjectiviteit, maar vertrouwen ze nog steeds op de gevestigde journalistieke routines om de wereld zo goed als mogelijk te verslaan. Dit bewustzijn maakt de waarheidsclaim in dergelijke stukken veel bescheidener, maar desalniettemin wordt er een poging gedaan om verslag van de werkelijkheid te doen op een manier die voor zo veel mogelijk mensen geldig is.

Bij de tweede vorm ontbreekt het vertrouwen in de journalistieke routines als middelen om de wereld op betrouwbare wijze te verslaan en wordt de manier van verslaggeven continu geproblematiseerd door de verslaggever. Daarmee wordt de waarheidsclaim van de journalistiek op losse schroeven zet. Als gevolg wordt de waarheidswaarde van dergelijke vormen van journalistiek dan ook met argwaan beschouwd. Een dergelijke ontwikkeling past in een bredere culturele ontwikkeling waarbij er getwijfeld wordt aan het gevestigde rationeel-positivistische kennismodel en er alternatieve vormen van kennisvergaring worden geformuleerd; een demonopolisering van de waarheid volgens Ulrich Beck. Als gevolg daarvan komt er ruimte voor alternatieve manieren van kennisvergaring, die meer ruimte bieden aan emotie, persoonlijke ervaring en subjectiviteit.

## Conclusie

Deze dissertatie laat dus zien dat de ontwikkeling van de journalistiek in Groot-Brittannië, Nederland en Frankrijk veel pluriformer is geweest dan vaak wordt aangenomen. Op basis van de resultaten ontstaat er een beeld van de journalistiekgeschiedenis vanaf de tweede helft van de 19e eeuw, waarin verschillende journalistieke opvattingen met elkaar concurreren om dominantie. Daarbij zijn er veel verschillen te onderscheiden tussen de drie landen. Mijn onderzoek laat zien hoe omstreden een term als objectiviteit is geweest en hoe recent het objectiviteitsregime zichzelf eigenlijk pas gevestigd heeft in de drie landen; iets dat te vaak miskend wordt in de bestaande (comparatieve) historiografie. Een dergelijk historisch geheugenverlies duidt op de overtuigingskracht die uitgaat van het objectiviteitsideaal en hoezeer deze standaard geïnternaliseerd is binnen de journalistiek in de decennia na de Tweede Wereldoorlog evenals in het onderzoek naar de journalistiekgeschiedenis. Zo'n genuanceerd historisch perspectief is juist van groot belang om de huidige ontwikkelingen goed te kunnen plaatsen en een vruchtbare discussie over de functie en kwaliteit van de journalistiek te kunnen voeren.

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Dat het Engels er enigszins fatsoenlijk uit is komen te zien, is voor een belangrijk deel te danken aan Liselotte en Judith die in de laatste fase alle hoofdstukken gecheckt hebben op grammatica en stijl. Dat jullie mijn voorliefde voor lange complexe zinnen even als voor het woordje 'like' hebben weten af te leren, lijkt mij voor iedereen een zegen.

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Naast mijn collega's was het ook altijd prettig om ervaringen uit te wisselen met mijn collega-promovendi die met mij begonnen zijn. In het bijzonder wil ik Boris (die stiekem een jaar eerder begon), Joost en Emiel noemen met wie ik samen de onderzoeksmaster heb gedaan en die als geen ander weten hoe lekker 'studiebier' is.

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Ook alle *glands contents* met wie ik jaarlijks kasteelheer speel in Frankrijk mogen niet onvermeld blijven in dezen en ook zij hebben oogluikend toegestaan dat ik het laatste jaar 's ochtends achter een net iets te laag 19e eeuw bureau in de hal nog aan mijn proefschrift zat te schaven. Mariëlle wil ik hierbij ook nog bedanken voor het fotograferen tijdens de verdediging!

Dan wil ik Peter bedanken, zonder wie dit proefschrift er uit had gezien als een matige kladversie met duidelijke overeenkomsten met de letterbrij in de kranten van voor 1900. Jouw creativiteit, oog voor detail en harde werken hebben ervoor gezorgd dat mijn proefschrift er mooier uit ziet dan ik ooit had gedacht.<sup>1</sup> Ik kan alleen maar hopen dat de inhoud enigszins kan tippen aan het uiterlijk.

Alex en Dominique wil ik nog een keer apart bedanken. Dat ik bij jullie in de drukste periode van mijn promotie altijd aan kon schuiven en ook weer veel te vroeg weggaan om nog te schrijven, maar bovenal de wetenschap dat dat eigenlijk altijd zo is, is mij zeer dierbaar. Dan wil ik natuurlijk

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<sup>1</sup> Voor alle geïnteresseerden, kijk eens op [www.hehallo.nl](http://www.hehallo.nl) voor meer van Peters werk!

mijn 'patchwork' familie nog noemen die altijd geïnteresseerd was in mijn promotie en het volste vertrouwen had in het resultaat. Mare, pap, Bert, mam, Liset, Marten, Lara, Joanna, er was altijd wel iemand van jullie met wie ik even een kopje koffie of iets anders kon drinken als ik daar zin in had en wel of juist niet over mijn onderzoek te praten.

Nu de verdediging nadert en er een hoop geregeld moet worden, ben ik heel blij dat jullie, Dominique en Marten, mijn paranimfen zijn. Toen ik bedacht wie ik in de momenten vlak voor mijn verdediging om me heen wilde hebben, waren jullie de eersten aan wie ik dacht. Het idee dat jullie die dag naast me lopen, geeft me vertrouwen.

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